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Memoirs of Convicted Prisoners.

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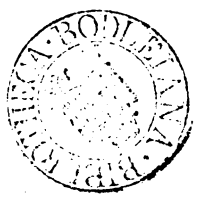
BODLEIANA

CASTLE, BARRACKS, & COURTS OF ASSIZE, CHESTER.

MEMOIRS

OF

CONVICTED PRISONERS;

ACCOMPANIED BY

REMARKS

ON THE

CAUSES AND PREVENTION OF CRIME.

BY THE REV. H. S. JOSEPH,

Chaplain of Chester Castle.

"The crime to-day, the punishment to-morrow,—
At noon the honeyed-cup, at night the gall,—
One hour's short joy, the next enduring sorrow,—
Rapture at noon, remorse at evening's fall—
So rolls for ever the unerring ball:
Cause and effect indissolubly blent.
The tree lies hidden in the acorn small;
The full ripe apple in the seed is pent;
And in the heart of crime throbs its own punishment."—*Mackey.*

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D E D I C A T E D

VERY RESPECTFULLY,

TO THE

MOST NOBLE THE MARQUIS OF WESTMINSTER,

LORD LIEUTENANT;

AND TO

THE MAGISTRATES

OF THE

COUNTY OF CHESTER,

BY THEIR OBEDIENT SERVANT,

HENRY SAMUEL JOSEPH.

PREFACE.

In an age like the present in which man's energies are principally directed towards the advancement of art and science, the extension and despatch of commercial enterprise, the improvement and comfort of all that concerns the outward man, we are apt to overlook much that has a tendency of bringing about the moral regeneration of our fellow-creatures. We have our churches, our schools, our hospitals, and other charitable institutions, and these certainly are the glory of our land. But is the exultation about these to have the effect of making us forget that our country is likewise studded with receptacles for the chastisement of crime? Are we to forget that our gin-palaces are more crowded than our churches? our hospitals more frequented by those who labour under diseases,

brought on by vice and intemperance, than by those who suffer, either from accident, or from the natural and gradual decay of the constitution? and that the turrets of our prisons do almost outnumber the steeples of the temples dedicated to the service of God? Much we have, and much has been effected respecting which we have cause to thank God; but very much remains to be done, and as long as it is left undone, we have great reason to humble ourselves in the sight of God.

It is an important, but melancholy fact, that man is constantly exposed to suffer a fatal wreck upon the breakers of vice and immorality, and all this through the unwieldy and corrupt machinery within us. By grace we stand—but by nature we are *all alike* exposed to the extravagances enacted by a perverse and unsanctified heart. Through sin man's lofty powers are bowed down in ignominious servitude to base corporeal appetites, and furious and debasing passions. His understanding is darkened, his will perverted, and his heart alienated from all that is holy. His

reason and conscience are dethroned, and selfishness reigns in gloomy and undisputed tyranny over his immortal mind, while appetite and passion have become its obedient slaves. His affections, originally constituted to have God for their prime object, now turn away with loathing from Him. Deeply and universally has man revolted from his rightful Sovereign, and has chosen other gods to rule over him. And how gloomy is the result of all this! Behold the wrong and oppression, the treachery and murder, the suicide and assassination, the revenge and hatred, the selfishness and cruelty which have caused such havoc among our fellow-creatures, filled our gaols, colonized our penal settlements, and delivered up its multitude of victims to the gallows!

The crooked ways and perverse ramifications of those who are mad in the arena of iniquity and the career of abomination, keep them secluded from the influence of morality and religion till they find themselves within the gaol; trifling incidents lead frequently to the committal of grave offences, and yet a

mere trifle will often reclaim the offender. How important then is it for us not to remain ignorant on these points?

To check the evil is the chief aim the writer has in view. To prevent crime is assuredly more meritorious than to inflict the penalty of the law for its commission; and he flatters himself that the parent, the clergyman, the teacher, the master—aye, and even the discharged prisoner himself, into whose hands this little volume may come, will find many hints, in the following pages, which will not fail to have a tendency (if acted upon) in many respects, to lessen human misery and suffering, to augment the worshippers in our churches, to decrease the frequenters of our gin-palaces, and to diminish the number of inmates in our gaols.

MEMOIRS OF PRISONERS.

CAUSES AND PREVENTION OF CRIME.

It may be asked by some of my readers, why publish these Memoirs? What good are they likely to produce? May they not be the means of encouraging others to commit crime? In reply I beg to say, that I am influenced by no other motive, in publishing these Memoirs, than to show how one crime is calculated to lead on to another, unless prevented by God's grace; until at last the offender is brought before a public tribunal, and not unfrequently ends his years in ignominy and sorrow.

Should this little volume get into the hands of either young or old offenders, I earnestly hope that under the Divine blessing, it may be the means of deterring men from running the downward road to eternal destruction. Before entering on the statements made by the various prisoners who have opened their hearts to me in my office, I will enter fully into what I consider to be some of the most important causes of crime and some of the means of prevention. The little book has no pretensions to much originality or literary merit, and therefore I trust it will be read as the production of one whose sole object is to do good to his fellow-creatures, and to excite a feeling of sympathy on behalf of those unfortunate persons who have never tasted of the grace of God.

We will now take a review of the most prominent causes which lead to crime. *Want of Education* is the first thing to be considered. Thousands of our labouring population, are as ignorant of Divine truth, as the greatest heathen. When

a prisoner is committed to prison, he is brought to my office. The questions I put to him are as follows:—What is your name? How old are you? For what are you committed to prison? How do you get your living? How much can you earn in a week? Of what religion are you? If Protestant—what place of worship did you attend? Here in most cases the prisoner becomes confused: the answer generally is, "Sometimes the Parish Church, but not often anywhere." Can you say the Lord's Prayer? In 8 cases out of 20, the reply is "I cannot." Can you read? In 16 cases out of 20 the reply is "No." Here then we see the need of *Education*. When I speak of education, I do not mean the instruction which is generally imparted to children in the manufacturing districts, on the Lord's Day, in Sunday Schools. I find that 18 out of 20 prisoners, from the age of 12 years to 24 years, have attended Sunday Schools. In these schools, they have been taught the first elements of education, instead of being directed to the Saviour of mankind, of hearing of their duty towards God, and their duty towards mankind. I do not mean that such is the case in *every* Sunday School. God forbid! but that it is so, in a great many, is evident, from the practical effect it has produced upon many young minds.

Sunday Schools, when established by Mr. Robert Raikes and the Rev. Mr. Stock, in 1781, were evidently for the purpose of instilling Christian truths and principles into the minds of the labouring classes, and not for secular instruction. If their principles had been fully carried out, no doubt our peasantry would not have been in that demoralized and demoralizing condition in which they now are. True it is that much has been done of late, and much is being done in the present day towards ameliorating the condition of the poor. But unless the foundation of education be on religious principle, then will it be far better to give them no education at all. Teach the rising generation their duty towards God and their duty towards their neighbour, as first principles, then give them whatever secu-

lar education you please. Unless this be done, we shall always find, that a want of *true education* will be one of the great causes of crime.

The words "true education" just quoted is the real and only sure remedy to prevent crime. The *mind* like the *body* must be occupied by proper exercise, each be nourished by proper food; then will each go on in a healthy and vigorous manner. But if *false principles*, *bad examples*, and *bad precepts* are allowed to be presented to the young mind, the prevalence of *folly* and *crime* must be inevitable.

A great majority of prisoners can neither *read* nor *write*; and this fact at once shows the necessity of giving a sound education. It is a cause of great thankfulness to learn that this subject is beginning more seriously to be considered both by our government and the country at large. While the mind is in a state of darkness what can be expected but crime? "If the fountain be impure, the stream must be impure also." I feel that I cannot do better, whilst we are on the subject of education than by giving the words of that excellent and venerable Judge, the Honorable Sir E. H. Alderson, Knt., as delivered by him in his charge to the Grand Jury at a special Assize, held in the Castle of Chester, for the county, in the winter of 1848:—

"It is too late, even if it were desirable (which it is not) to uneducate the poor. Our safety lies, on the contrary, in advancement, provided we advance in the right direction. We must fully educate them. We must teach them their duties to GOD and to their neighbours. As to their rights we need not fear but that they will find them out from their present teachers. But how are we to do this? Surely in the same way that a good father teaches his own children. First, by an uniform course of kind and affectionate conduct towards them, he convinces them that he really loves them: then, even when he corrects their errors, he does it firmly but tenderly. He shews them, that while he hates the fault and punishes it, he loves the

erring child, and even punishes him because he loves him. The influence he thus obtains, he uses to induce them to listen to the dictates of his maturer wisdom and more exercised powers; and they learn from his wisdom because they have first learnt to love him as a teacher. Just so must we do with the poor. The gentleman of estate with his labourers—the opulent manufacturer with his workmen—the tradesman with his apprentices—the clergy, in their more extended sphere, with their flocks—in short all of us, with our respective dependents, must make men feel that we sympathize with their sufferings and wish their real good; that we seek not theirs but them; and that with us the name of brother is not a mere empty sound, but denotes in our vocabulary a member of Christ our Head, and fellow-heir of immortality. Then, with what force will our exhortations fall upon their willing ears. Then, how easily may we convince those who have become well assured of our sincerity and love. Then, how easily will it be to demonstrate, and how willingly will the demonstration be received, that the accumulation of capital in the manufacturing districts is really a blessing to the public, by providing in the time of prosperity and abundance (like the corn of Joseph in Egypt) the sources out of which succeeding years of scarcity may be fed, so that all shall share in the ultimate benefit to be thereby derived to the capitalist. And how willingly, then, will men acknowledge that the large and extensive estates of our nobility and gentry are really a blessing, by being kept together, not for private luxury, but as enabling their possessors the better to promote agriculture, the more easily to establish schools, to build churches, and to civilize and improve the whole face of their surrounding districts."

Want of Employment may be considered as a second cause of crime. True it is, that many are to be found who will not work, to get an honest livelihood for themselves and families, but prefer living as it is called, "by their wits." This is often the case in large towns and more particularly in persons who

have never been brought up to any regular employ. They too frequently resort to gambling, trickery, or any other dishonest way to get money rather than work; but it too often happens, and particularly in the winter seasons, that men cannot obtain work; they are then frequently driven to do that which, under other circumstances, they would abhor and detest. It is indeed a great trial to a man with a large family depending on him for their daily sustenance, to have no employ and yet to be honest. You may say—"There is the Workhouse." True! but that is not for the *unfortunate.*

Poverty and destitution must bring into the dwellings of the poor, pestilence or disease of some sort, before they can be found to merit help from the Unions. It is one great defect in our poor-law system, that the honest poor man in health is left almost to starve, or be driven to commit crime in order to obtain food to satisfy nature, not only for himself but for his poor wife and dependent children. We are willing to admit that the poor working man is often improvident when in full employ, and neglects that, which the *ant* and the *bee* are observed to do, viz, provide for the necessities of the winter season; but we ought to look with Christian charity on the weakness and follies of our poorer and more ignorant fellow-creatures. The present mode of administering relief to the poor is very objectionable in many points of view, too frequently offering, as it were, a bonus to poverty. It is to be regretted that our Union Poor Houses are little better than nurseries of vice. We will not enter into any prolix arguments to prove this assertion; to a reflecting mind, and to one who can trace effects from causes, this statement is self-evident. Suffice it to say, that the fact of a person being in a state to entitle him to parochial relief, is considered degrading to all the fine feelings of human nature: for one of the effects of receiving such relief, and in such a manner, is the loss of self-respect; which is a great cause of crime. A certain degree of reasonable pride and independence of thought and action tend to elevate the character, for there

is an instinctive feeling in human nature to desire to be thought good and respectable—hence the love of dress, and the wish to have good furniture and a clean household. We knew an instance of a woman having a large family and a drunken husband, all living together in two small rooms. She was very industrious, and a good needle-woman; by her exertions she maintained herself and children. When brought to a state of starvation, she opened her heart and related her troubles; she was advised to put her children in the Union Workhouse. She said, "What! put them in that den of infamy! One of my girls was there for a short time, and from what she saw, and what she related to me, I would rather see them dead, than go to such a school of vice and wickedness."

The next and one of the greatest causes of crime which I shall notice is *Drunkenness.* This is a monstrous cause; this is the besetting sin of our labouring population. It has brought thousands to infamy and shame. Were it not for the *Gin Shop* and *Public House,* thousands of our fellow-creatures might be saved from prison and transportation. Strange indeed that man, the highest and noblest of beings, should so far forget himself as to sink to a level with the vilest! In no country in all Europe does drunkenness appear in a more revolting form, than in our own highly-favoured land. In all my visits to Germany, Holland, Belgium, and France, I have never seen drunkenness carried on to such an awful excess as in England. During an absence from England for some months, I never saw a drunken man or woman; but no sooner had I set my foot on England's happy shores, than I met with both men and women in a state of inebriation! Well has it been stated in a New York Paper—"We know nothing which so fearfully indicates the criminal indifference of those who make and execute laws, to the moral state of the multitude, as the attractive and treacherous splendour with which dealers in intoxicating drinks are, the world over, allowed to invest their calling." Particularly is this the case in London. The stranger

passing the lower end of Holborn, or the neighbourhood of Whitechapel, or the New Cut, may at a late hour be attracted by the flaring gas lights, and flashy elegance, which distinguish the entrance to some house of more than ordinary pretensions. Let them enter—following the throng of visitors, and his eye will at once be struck with a scene, which is awful beyond measure. In every direction there is the glitter of glass and of gilding, and a theatrical splendour of carvings and curtains. But what a contrast does the house present to the motley misery of its visitors. Look at them! The poor and the base, the degraded and the hardened. This is a Gin Palace —one of Satan's vilest pandemoniums on earth. This indeed is an awful picture of our gin shops. These shops are honestly and faithfully represented in Cruickshank's Illustrations of the Drunkard's Children. These illustrations are framed and hung up in my office, together with his representation of the Drunkard. Frequently have they attracted the eye of the prisoner who, after looking steadfastly upon them, has shaken his head and said—"Ah! Sir, this has been my ruin—had I not have been a *drunkard*, I should never have been a *prisoner*." The drinking customs seem the bane of most civilized countries, and have contributed more than any other cause to hasten the downfall and ruin of many ancient kingdoms. The evils which spring from this source are more extensive and more permanent than is generally known; in whatever light it is viewed, whether physically in the human body, or morally on the mind and character, we have cause to deplore the effects of this dreadful scourge. The direct effects are pregnant with misery, and ought to call forth every benevolent and kind-feeling individual to do all in their power to remove this great curse from our land. Oh how vast and multiplied are its indirect and remote effects!

There is a Rabbinical tradition "that when Noah planted the *vine*, Satan attended and sacrificed a *sheep*, a *lion*, an *ape*, and a *sow*. These animals were to symbolize the gradations

of ebriety. When a man begins to drink intoxicating liquors he is meek and ignorant as the *lamb*, then becomes bold like the *lion*; his courage is soon transformed into the foolishness of the *ape*, and at last he wallows in the mire like a *sow*." Surely there is some truth in these *symbols*; as to the *tradition*, we make no observation. When men are so determined to have these intoxicating drinks, even at the sacrifice of all principles, and at the expense of imprisonment and transportation, it is high time that some thing should be done by the legislature, some law enacted to put a stop to this besetting evil. I do not presume even to suggest the enactment of any law: this I willingly leave to "the powers that be." Let us however just glance into those countries where intemperance is entirely prohibited. Look at North Africa; here we have a Mohamedan country—here the use of all intoxicating drinks is prohibited by the Koran, which in fact constitutes the public law; and where every one is from infancy brought up in the belief that a single breach of this precept compromises his safety in the other world, and he is well aware that it renders him liable to most severe punishments in this. An interesting tale is narrated by a great traveller, who passed through Egypt, Palestine, Mesopotamia, and Arabia, and ultimately settled in India, where he lived six years. In the course of these journeys he passed over-land to India, and twice back. It occupied him three years. The distance he travelled could not have been less than 30,000 miles. He visited the populous metropolitan cities of Cairo, Damascus, Aleppo, and Ispahan; and the number of people he saw could not have been less than *three millions*; but in all the time occupied in travelling 30,000 miles, he had not seen *twenty drunken persons*. To these countries the remarks he had made respecting the European nations would apply with ten-fold force. The Europeans had at least Christianity for the basis of their religion, and they had something like political freedom; but these people were Mohamedans—they were subject to uncontrolled des-

potism—their women slaves; and yet notwithstanding their gross and miserable inferiority in religion, in political rights, and in social and domestic life, they were still our superiors in this matter of sobriety. When he landed at Portsmouth, he had not spent three hours, when he saw *fifty drunken persons.* That such should be the case in an enlightened and highly-favoured country as ours really is, is truly awful. Nevertheless so it is. What then is to be done, in order to get rid of this great pestilence? This indeed is a question, which I fear is difficult to answer. Have we no philanthropist who will warmly consider the present degraded state of our labouring population? Oh let us "take the bull by the horns," and go to work with energy and holy zeal and in the name of the Lord let us do all in our power to put down this great evil, which fills our gaols, increases our county rates, and causes thousands of families to spend their days and years in misery. Put down drunkenness, and our churches will be well attended. Encourage the jerry shops and gin palaces, then our gaols will always be filled with unhappy men and women.

All have influence. That there is a sphere of influence possessed by every one, not even excepting the *child,* was affectingly illustrated in the following incident:—

"Some years ago," says Mr. Rotch, "I was addressing a public meeting in the neighbourhood of Aylesbury, and in the course of my remarks, I endeavoured to enforce *individual duty,* and the right exercise of *individual influence.* There sat on the front form, a fine-looking but weather-beaten railway 'navvie,' who paid very earnest attention to me. He had, sitting on his knee, a little girl, about five years old. By way of refuting the common excuse for indolence, 'I have no influence,' I remarked that the little girl sitting on the working man's knee, in front of me, even *she* had *influence.* The man, as if acting under some magic spell, jumped on his legs, put the child on the floor, and then striking his hand against his thighs, exclaimed, *'That's*

true.' This singular interruption somewhat disconcerted the speaker. The man, evidently embarrassed at what he had done, took his seat, reinstated his little girl on his knee, and again drank in the truths delivered to the meeting. 'As I was leaving the room,' says Mr. Rotch, 'this man was waiting at the door.' I said to him, 'Now, my good man, tell me, what induced you to conduct yourself in the way you did?'' 'Some time ago,' said he 'I was employed on the railway, and was in the habit of going every night to a beer-shop, from which I seldom returned sober. I had,' said he (with the big tear glistening in his eye) 'at that time, a daughter nineteen years of age; she was a dutiful child, with a warm and affectionate heart. She used to come after me to the beer-shop, but she would *never go inside*, though I sometimes pressed her to do so. She would wait outside the door, in the cold and wet, until I came out, that she might conduct me home. She was afraid, if left to myself, I might fall into some pit, or down some precipice, and lose my life. By this conduct, poor thing, she caught a severe cold. It turned to consumption, and she died. I felt her death very much, though I still went to the beer-shop; but, somehow or other, I never, after her death, liked to go that way *alone*, especially in the night; and for the sake of company, I used to take with me the little girl whom you saw sitting on my knee to-night. But one night' he continued, 'I was walking along with the little girl, she holding by my coat tail, and when we got very near the beer-shop, there was a great noise within, and my little girl shrank back and said, '*Father, don't go.*' Vexed with her, I took her up in my arms and proceeded, but just as I was entering the beer-house door, I felt *a scalding hot tear* fall from her eyes. *It* went to my heart. I turned my back upon the public-house. It is now twelve months ago, and I have *never tasted drink since. I could not help* getting up, and doing what I did; but I hope, sir, you will forgive me.'"

It is stated by an able writer, in the 'Leisure Hour,' "that in forty towns in Scotland, every 149 of the population sup-

port a *dram-shop*; while it requires 981 to keep a *baker*, 1067 to support a *butcher*, and 2281 to sustain a *bookseller*." This looks very bad; something is awfully wrong here!

Lord Brougham observed some time ago, in the House of Lords, that 44,000 persons were recently seen to enter various public houses in Edinburgh! We could fill volumes, and after all, not enumerate all the evils arising from public-houses being allowed to sell their intoxicating drinks; more especially on the Lord's Day. We do hope that the time is not far distant when this enormous evil will be remedied by salutary laws.

Effects of Intemperance. "One day a clergyman, on leaving one of the metropolitan churches, was accosted by the coachman of a friend, who, in a very excited state, told him that he had something upon his mind, which he particularly desired to communicate. When they had retired from the public thoroughfare, the man informed him that he had just seen the devil, who had told him the whole history of his past wicked life: of his swearing and drunkenness; and concluded by assuring him, that in four days he would be with *him*. 'And I am persuaded' added the unhappy man, 'it is true; in four days I shall be dead.' The clergyman, after endeavouring to direct his mind to the Saviour, the stronger than the strong, who was more powerful than the devil, and who was 'able and willing to save unto the uttermost, all that come unto God by Him,' accompanied the man to his master's house, where he explained to his friend the circumstances, and they engaged together in earnest prayer. On exhorting him to seek for mercy and forgiveness through Christ, the man exclaimed, 'Ah, it is of no use now! I have had the best of masters, who has always most earnestly striven to make me give up my bad habits, and has frequently told me of the misery of hell, and of the danger of dying in impenitence, but I could not give up drinking. I have often listened to you, Sir,' he said, addressing the clergyman, 'with pleasure, and have gone

straight from the church to the beer-house, where I have talked of your sermon *over my drink*. I am very thankful to you for your good advice and prayers. But it is too late! too late! I am lost!' Both the clergyman and his friend had other conversations with the poor man after this, commending him to the Saviour of sinners, and exhorting him to seek for pardon and peace through the atoning blood of the Lamb; but their affectionate entreaties and exhortations were always met by the despairing answer, 'It is too late! I am lost!' On the fifth day after the circumstance happened, the clergyman received a note from his friend, informing him of the coachman's death on the previous evening, from a violent attack of delirium tremens. He died from *excessive drinking*, and the few coherent words that he uttered immediately before his death were, for fresh draughts of the deadly liquor which had caused his destruction.

"The circumstances detailed are strange and mysterious—by some they will be attributed to hallucination—by others to the nature of his disease—and others again will assign to them a different cause. But setting aside whatever is remarkable, the solemn truth remains,—the man died from *drinking*, and it is feared, *without hope!* Drunkard! here is a warning for you. You who think there is *no harm* in what is called 'a cheerful glass,' here is a startling lesson for you. There is POISON in the cup! Know assuredly that 'drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God.'"

I shall now notice another great cause of crime, and which I consider to be intimately connected with drunkenness, viz. the *Pawnbroking system* as carried on in this country. There is something wrong in this system; something which ought to be looked into by the Legislature.

It has often been said that that Government which governs the least is the best Government. This has often been carried out with a degree of severity, that would almost make us wish that, in some instances, some deviation from its inflexibility

could be at times permitted. The Government, whether municipal or national, governs by far too little, which merely *punishes* with severity the offender, and neglects those *precautionary measures* by which he might have been kept from transgressing. There are various instances, that the *receiver* of stolen property is far more culpable than the *thief*. Too great facility is given in this country to pawnbroking-shops. If no such places were in existence, less, much less crime would be committed. There can be but little doubt that pawnbrokers, either ignorantly, or knowingly, are, as a class, receivers of stolen goods; if knowingly, then they ought to be placed by the law on a level with the criminals whom they encourage and form. Not unfrequently have burglaries been committed, and, by nine o'clock in the morning, the stolen goods have been pledged, and the burglar has escaped.

In some cases, through the vigilance of the police officer, some have been detected, whilst numbers have never been heard of, or found out. If the pawnbroker would only be as vigilant in arresting the unrightful owner of the property as the policeman is, hundreds of unhappy men would be deterred from house-breaking. But so long as such facilities are afforded to the thief, the public have but very little security for their property.

It may however be said, that pawnbroking-shops are absolutely requisite in large towns. If so, why not have them placed under the *surveillance* of a municipal government? This is done in France, and why should it not be carried out in our own country? Unless we have some great change for the better management of these shops, we shall always have our gaols filled with prisoners. Yes—if pawnbroking must be recognised as a social necessity, let it be under control of the city authorities; not in the hands of an irresponsible set of men, who, too generally speaking, are the encouragers of thievery and of thieves. In this particular we may learn a valuable lesson from other countries. The *Mont de Pieté* of Paris is a vast pawnbroking establishment, managed entirely by Government, where poor

persons can, at a moderate interest, pledge articles of every nature. In this country, such establishments might appropriately be under charge of the head of the police, and if well managed, they would, beyond a doubt, even prove a prolific source of revenue.

Thieves would experience far greater difficulty in disposing of their plunder, and thievery would in consequence be diminished. I do hope, under the Divine guidance and direction, that these arguments will induce our energetic philanthropists to put their shoulder to this wheel of reform, and from my heart, I wish them God speed. In whatever light we view the causes of crime, whether on the body or mind, and character, we have equally cause to deplore; for they are pregnant with misery enough to command the aid of every benevolent and kind feeling of our heart; not only do they inflict misery, crime, degradation, and disease on the individual himself, but others, connected with him, are drawn as it were into the vortex, and a stigma is cast upon them. Do not many parents mourn over a son, lost by crime; who, instead of being a comfort to them has frequently brought down their grey hairs with sorrow to the grave? Has the criminal a wife? Too frequently has she with a broken heart sunk into an untimely grave, and it may be without hope in a Saviour. The innocent smiles of the children are changed into tears of commiseration; and often, instead of looking on their father with love, they regard him only with fear and dread—and so they very frequently either tread in the paths of their wretched parent, or grow up with feelings of disgust and contempt of his vices.

Much might be said, and written, on *poaching, smuggling, gambling, wakes, and pleasure fairs*—all of which have a great tendency to increase crime. I will now offer a few remarks on the manner in which the Sabbath is generally observed, particularly in *villages*. I have no doubt, that more sin and wickedness is carried on, particularly I say in country places, on the Lord's Day, than on any other day in the week.

True it is, that all public houses must be closed, during Divine Service; but after four o'clock in the afternoon, these houses are all opened, and business carried on the same as on any other day in the week. Why should this be allowed in the public house and gin shop? It is not allowed (and very properly so) to the *baker*, the *butcher*, &c. &c. Surely the same law ought to be enforced on the one, as well as on the other. More robberies are concocted in the ale-house, on a Sabbath evening, than any other evening in the week. This I have heard from the lips of many unfortunate prisoners. The profanation of the Sabbath was one of the sins for which God punished the Jews and kept them in captivity for *seventy years*. The violation of this day is productive of great and many evils. Numbers of unhappy prisoners trace the commencement of sin to the violation of this law. Would to God that these things were not so! but they are too visible not to be seen, and they, no doubt, will bring God's righteous judgments upon us. "Shall I not visit for these things saith the Lord, shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?"

If the Sabbaths were really kept holy and the Lord's name and laws honoured, how few depredations would then be committed! But this remark of keeping the Sabbath day holy must not be confined to the *labouring class*, for if we go into the *higher circles*, how few are there who shew proper attention to this positive command! The power of *example* is very strong, and if the heads of families, who have numerous domestics under their influence, live in the neglect of Divine worship, and pay but little regard to the Lord's Day, we cannot but expect that this evil will still become more and more prevalent. The Sabbath was intended as a day of rest, that men may have time to devote themselves to the public worship of God, in His sanctuary; it is in fact the poor man's charter. But how few there are who really enjoy it! I will not attempt even to suggest any plan, which might induce the labouring man to keep from the ale-house, more especially on the Lord's

Day. I will leave this in the hands of those who have power and interest in their respective parishes to adopt such plans for the better observance of this holy day, which under the Divine guidance may make it a blessing; so that the poor man might "call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord honourable."

Domestic infelicity often drives the husband from his home to seek for quiet and peace, which the want of a comfortable fireside would give him; hence he becomes too frequently the companion of the depraved and the boon companion of the sot; and resorts to the tavern to spend his Sunday evenings, and thus is often insensibly led into the road to ruin. Let us then encourage Mutual Improvement Societies, Free Libraries, Public Lectures, Night Schools, Sunday Schools, and above all Ragged Schools, as instruments of progress and within the power of the poor to avail themselves of them. We cannot but grieve, to think that men require to be persuaded to "cease to do evil and learn to do well," when the one is so sure to produce *unhappiness* and *disease*, while the other brings with it *happiness* and *peace*. Such, however, is the depravity of the heart; men prefer darkness to light because their deeds are evil. We then, who have tasted of the grace of God, ought to use every means to bring them to the light and the truth, as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord. We must hope and trust that the time is not far distant when, by God's grace, a great change will take place for the better, so as to prevent the necessity of the strong arm of the law interfering and rescuing mankind from the various causes of crime.

It has often been said, that *lowness of wages* is one of the great causes of crime. This I deny. The following statements I think will fully bear me out in what I have said. Prisoner W. C. when in my office and looking at "Cruickshank's pictures of the Bottle," said "When I look at these pictures I am reminded of my own past life. I lost my situation through drunkenness. I used to earn from twenty

to thirty shillings a week, as a porter in the Bridgewater Company. I spent most of my money in the jerry shops. I was nineteen weeks out of work, but whenever I earned a few shillings I went to drink again. Two days, before I was committed to prison, I earned fourteen shillings and sixpence. I spent about six shillings of this at the ale-house."

Prisoner W. M. C., convicted of burglary and sentenced to seven years' transportation, says, "I was well brought up, and received a good education; was apprenticed to a shoe-maker. When very young, I got married, but through the effects of drunkenness I lived very unhappily with my wife. I could earn thirty and sometimes forty shillings a week; the more I earned, the more I spent in drink."

J. F. says, "at five years of age I commenced boating on the canal. I never recollect going to any place of worship until I was thirteen years of age. My mother was a religious woman, and used to take me when she could to a Baptist Chapel. I soon left her and went off again boating. I never again attended any place of worship until I was 24 years of age; that was when I was on board a man-of-war. In Plymouth I was paid off, and got £10. 10s. 3d. I spent the whole of this in drink, and so from time to time I got a great deal of money and it all went in drink. The first robbery I ever committed was this, for house-breaking, and for which I am sentenced to 10 years' transportation."

C. W. says, "I have been a boatman most part of my life, and generally earned from eighteen to twenty shillings a week. —most of this I spent in drink. I seldom attended any place of worship—seldom knew when the Sabbath day was—as every day was alike to us: the more money I got, the better it was for the jerry shops. I always worked very hard, but spent all my money in drink. I have learned much from you since I have been here, and I hope I shall never forget it as long as I live." W. C. says, "I have been a boatman ever since I was 12 years of age—am now 24 years old—I have been a sad

drunkard, and lived a bad life. I have not been more than four or five times to any place of worship for the last 12 years. I was obliged to work on Sundays as well as other days. Many of us never attended any place of worship.

Thus far then it is evident that lowness of wages is not a cause of crime.

We shall now proceed to lay before our readers Memoirs of several convicted prisoners, which will show how easily one crime leads on towards another, and therefore highly essential that vice of every description ought to be checked whilst in its infancy; and not suffered to go on from time to time, until at last the offender becomes so hardened, that nothing but God's special grace can bring him to know and to feel the sinfulness of sin and the need of a Saviour.

We shall give the statements of the different prisoners as they were narrated by them without any alteration.

MEMOIRS, &c.

THE LIFE OF W. R.

I was born in Scotland, and am an illegitimate son. I never could trace who my father was, although I have often spoken to my mother concerning him, but she would never give me any satisfactory account of him, and always avoided conversing on that subject; my mother residing at the far end of the town, put me under the care of a guardian whose name I will call Mrs. H. to nurse and bring up. My poor unfortunate mother allowed me all sorts of indulgences that my heart could desire, such as money, clothing, books and toys, which no doubt has tended greatly to bring me to what I now am; she visited me once each week, and the Sabbath day was generally appointed for that purpose, which day, I am sorry to say, was either spent in irreligious converse between her and Mrs. H. or in driving about the country in a cabriolet the greater part of the day; which kind of pleasure the devil giveth those who serve him, and disregard the commandments of God, and the laws of man.

As I grew older I was put to school under a very pious and learned clergyman, and through whose care and instruction I might have grown up to be a creditable member of society, had I only taken his advice; but the love of money and worldly pleasures got the better of my weak and unconscious heart; in short my attendance at school was very irregular, and I became so averse to scholastic duties that Mrs. H. was frequently

obliged to employ a common street-porter to take me thither by force; I evidently was growing worse every day. (At this time to the best of my knowledge I should be about ten years of age). I got into the evil habit of swearing, smoking, &c., and other petty vices, which generally mark the commencement of a profligate life. The result of this was that a dishonest principle sprung up in my mind; I began to pilfer the books my mother had furnished me with; I had a plentiful supply of them, and became a frequent customer to the old book merchant, who no doubt was always glad to see me. I then sacrificed my clothing, &c. After all was gone I usually fled to Mrs. H's. cash drawer, and helped myself, so that I could make a great show among my playfellows, knowing well where she kept her money. These early and ill-gotten means were generally spent at a shop in the town, noted for selling penny pies and porter. We were shown into the parlour, where a company of young reprobates would sit and pass the day in swearing, smoking, eating, drinking, and devising all sorts of mischief. Here we had every encouragement, so long as we paid for what we had and did not make too much noise. Mrs. H. used to hide from my poor mother the greater portion of my misdeeds, which I now deeply regret; she did sometimes tell her a little, for which I received a good sound flogging; and I may truly say, that although my mother was indifferently situated, there was no evil she had a greater aversion to than *dishonesty*. Some time passed in this way, when she unexpectedly informed us of her intentions to send us to Liverpool to live; and Mrs. H. and I were dispatched thither to procure a suitable house to go into, on our arrival with the whole family, &c. We had no difficulty in finding a house, and returned to Scotland to acquaint my mother of our success. The furniture was packed up and sent off, and after bidding adieu to all our friends, &c., the Scottish exiles took their departure, which consisted of Mr. and Mrs. H., my brother, sister, and myself. We arrived safe, and took possession of the house, and in a

few days were properly settled. Shortly after this sudden change in circumstances, my brother and I were sent to school again, and attended the Mechanics' Institution, which place is well known in Liverpool. I continued very steady for a few weeks, and went to school regularly; but alas! this was only for a short duration. I soon got mixed with a class of boys of very bad habits, and in a very little time was ten-times worse than I ever had been. Everything that I could now place my hands upon was converted into cash, and squandered away with my evil associates, who were always pleased with my company on these occasions. It may be advisable as well as acceptable to inform you of what these depredations chiefly consisted; namely: clothing, silver spoons, trinkets, books, and money; together with a watch, which was the property of my brother. I then became habitual in staying out late at nights, and oft-times did not reach home at all; but would go and pass the night in a stable or some outbuildings; at the same time devising plans to go stealing apples. It is not without regret that I am obliged to say the blessed Sabbath was generally spent in these pilfering excursions. I had also a bosom companion named B—, who used frequently to aid me in breaking into empty houses, and cutting away the lead piping; taking the linings out of cisterns, (which were lead); and tearing all the brass-fittings from the door-bells, and windows. A short time afterwards my companion received sentence of transportation for shoplifting, which was committed in the same neighbourhood in which we lived. Circumstances continued the same with me for some time, until I committed an act of villany too atrocious to be mentioned, being of a very serious nature. My mother came to Liverpool immediately after receiving information of the same; I well remember she was taken ill in consequence, and remained indisposed for some time; at length she proposed to take me home to Scotland with her, and put me to some trade, to see if that would make any alteration in me for the better; we accordingly took our departure, leav-

ing my brother and sister still in the care of Mrs. H., and arrived in Scotland safe. When we got home, lodgings were provided for me, until some arrangements could be made. My mother came and asked me if I should like to go to sea. I gladly replied in the affirmative, thinking no doubt I should have a fine life; she went to a gentleman whom she knew, and requested him to get me a berth on board a ship, which was done immediately, he having a correspondent in Liverpool. The berth being procured, a stock of sea-clothing was necessary, and a very complete chest of clothes was purchased for me. The outlay must have cost my mother near twelve pounds sterling. There was also a premium of £50. given the master of the vessel; I was then sent off to Liverpool, to join the ship, leaving my mother and Mr. W. (the gentleman above named), in the hopes that I should be quite a reformed youth. I joined the ship, which was bound to Mobile, in North America. We took in a cargo of cotton there, which was consigned to Liverpool; which port we reached safe, after a voyage of six months. Now I must candidly confess that this trip was the principal cause of my being led into an early stage of prostitution. Grog-shops and prostitutes being the general conversation on board the ship, had such an impression on my already corrupt heart, that I was no sooner at liberty than I plunged myself into an excess of riot, &c. It may appear almost incredible that a boy of my years could be capable of such iniquity, (being then between twelve and thirteen years of age). On my arrival in Liverpool the captain provided me with a place to board and lodge, which was with a friend of his, who kept a large Ale and Spirit Vaults, in the vicinity of Park Lane, near the Docks. I was no sooner settled, than the evil one began his great work of temptation. I became a frequenter of play-houses, singing saloons, and houses of ill fame, in which last place you may easily suppose I was the slur of the whole company being so young. Perchance you may wish to know how I raised the means of carrying on this style of life; it was simply, that I secretly

conveyed my clothes, and other articles from my lodgings which I thought would not be missed, and the good people of the house not suspecting me to be a bad character, I had free access to any part of the house and was often in the bar; and when an opportunity afforded me I did not fail to help myself out of the money drawer, which was seldom or ever locked. I went on in this manner for about three weeks, during which time I carried on a correspondence with my mother and Mr. W. by letters, which were filled with all sorts of falsity and cunning, in order to cloak my nefarious practises; but such doings will have an end, as you will perceive. The landlord at last suspected all was not right, and finding my chest almost empty, told the captain, who wrote to my mother; and she upon the receipt of such unexpected intelligence lost no time in visiting me; when to my utter dismay and confusion nearly everything was found out. My mother took this new outbreak so much at heart, that she was confined to her bed, and under the special care of a surgeon for some time. I had by this come to a most lamentable state of demoralization, as you shall hear. I visited my mother once in her illness, and then I must say I felt a little moved to see what I had brought upon her; but as soon as she dismissed me, I was resolved how to act. I then went direct to my lodging, and borrowed fifteen shillings to buy a pair of new boots, alleging that my mother had authorized me so to do. When I received the money I left the house, and spent the whole night in company with a prostitute. The next day my conscience accused me so forcibly that I came to a determination never to return. I heard since then that my mother (may I be permitted to ask God to be merciful to me for my ungrateful and reckless conduct towards so kind, so fond a parent) was compelled to sacrifice her watch and chain to support her, until she could get a remittance from home to defray her expenses. For a short time I was skulking about the docks throughout the day, and at night sleeping in stables and such like places. At last

I shipped on board a coasting schooner, as cook. I then had the audacity to go to my late boarding-house to get the few remaining articles of clothing I had left there. Of course I met with a very cold reception and was informed that my mother had gone home, but my clothes should be given me; which being done, I departed and joined the schooner. We were bound to Westport in Ireland, where I robbed the captain of some money and decamped with it, and went to Dublin by the mail coach. Proceeding from thence to Glasgow per packet, whither I reached in great glee, congratulating myself on having such a narrow escape. After I had squandered away all my money, and was again reduced to poverty, I had no other alternative, than beg, steal, or return home in disgrace. I chose the latter, being afraid to risk the former. On my return to Edinburgh, I did not know exactly where to find my mother, and was obliged to go to Mr. W's. in order to find her; and, notwithstanding my cruelty and displeasing behaviour to her, I was received as a prodigal son, and treated in a very different manner to my expectations, and what my general *deportment really merited.* It would be tedious and unnecessary to state all that happened on this occasion, suffice it to say that Mr. W. promised to provide me with another berth, and give me another trial; the berth was soon obtained for me, and suitable clothing purchased, which cost between £4. and £5., and a canvass bag to put them in, which was in lieu of a chest. My mother accompanied me to Greenock, whither the vessel was lying, and all things being settled, I went to see her off by the train, after promising sincerely to turn over a new leaf; nothing of importance occurred during the passages out and home, further than the voyage was completed to Quebec and back to Greenock, in the short space of three months. I was then discharged, and received my wages from the owners, which was very trifling, but out of which I purchased myself a suit of clothes, paid my train expenses home to E—, spent the residue of my wages there, and pro-

ceeded to knock my mother up at a very early hour in the morning, to give her, as I termed it, a surprise! she being unaware of my return to England. It may be advisable to mention that she had left the former house, and was settled in a private one; she having my brother and sister under her own care and protection. I was admitted, and the same day, after a great deal of ceremony between Mr. W. and my mother, I was placed out to lodge, she being unwilling for me to stay in the house with her, and I was to remain there till another berth was got for me. This suited my ungrateful and evil heart, being under no control, and in a manner could do as I pleased. I will here mention the name of the person with whom I lodged, having occasion to make use of the name as I proceed; it was one Mrs. P.; I stayed with her two or three weeks, during which time I kept from dishonesty, excluding one act only, i. e. I became acquainted with a servant-girl, whom I often visited, and frequently passed an hour or two with her in the house where she lived at service; on one of these occasions I was admitted into the parlour and left there a few minutes alone; in the the mean while I abstracted from a drawer a silver watch, being the only article of value it contained; my stay of course with the servant was a very brief one. I went and sold the watch for £1., which was spent in the usual way. The poor innocent girl was accused of the theft and lost her situation on account of it, and I was not suspected. Mr. W. at length got me a berth on board a schooner, bound to Bourdeaux, from the port of Leith. I was there once more fixed, not without having incurred a little more expense in the clothing line. On our arrival at Bourdeaux, myself and two others of the crew, being supplied with a little cash, obtained a day's leave to go on shore; this was on the Sabbath day. I accompanied the others to a bagnio which was well known to them, and most all seamen who frequent Bourdeaux. We spent the day in rioting and drunkenness, returning on board at night more like beasts than human beings; I remember this day

closed in a very barbarous fight between the mate of our craft, and one of the crew of another vessel, and I was the instigation of it. I returned home after an absence of three months; my bad conduct was reported, and discharged with only a few shillings for my past services. Things now took a very different turn with me, to what you may suppose. My mother had removed to a large self-contained house, about four miles distant from E. which was convenient to the ocean, and beautifully situated for sea bathing. My mother would not permit me to stay with her, neither could it be supposed she would; I was therefore put to board with Mrs. H. our old guardian, who was then living in the town of L., a mile distant from my mother's residence. I purposed abandoning the sea-faring life, and to learn a trade. I was not long before I disclosed my new resolutions to my ever-attentive parent. Now my base ingratitude and undutiful conduct must have caused a great deal of anxiety, and have sadly troubled my poor fond mother's mind. What do I deserve for all this? I have now met with its *just reward*; still I ask God of his infinite mercy to pardon me. Mr. W. would have nothing more to do with me; I was therefore left alone for a few weeks, until my mother could get *something* done for me; my time was fully taken up among the worst of characters. My mother applied to another gentleman to see if he could by any chance put me to some trade; he came and asked me what trade I had fixed upon. I said an iron-moulder. He left me promising to get me a situation as soon as convenient. In a few days I was told that this gentleman had procured me a place of work at a foundry, near Berwick-upon-Tweed. I was then to prepare for this new change in life, and having suitable clothing, was sent off, and the clerk of the foundry received me on my arrival, it having been previously arranged that I should board with him. I remained for some time in my new situation, and being very steady gave general satisfaction; but owing to a great depression in the trade, which took place shortly afterwards, my master

was unable to keep his men in full work; we were sometimes two or three days idle in the week, and this continued for some time; in the meanwhile I became acquainted with the landlord of a public-house in the neighbourhood, and being able to play the violin pretty well, he and I were very intimate. At last the work was so slack that the proprietor deemed it necessary to close the foundry for a short period, in the hopes that a change would soon take place. Now during the stoppage in the work affair there was going on in my heart a greater change. I was devising all manner of schemes and falsehood to my mother by letters to gain her consent to leave my lodgings with the clerk, and to find another. I however accomplished my design, left the clerk and went to board with the landlord before mentioned, at twelve shillings per week. My mother on hearing of the work being stopped meant that I should remain a week or two, thinking the work would soon begin again. I had only been a few days in my new abode, where I had become a very conspicuous person, as boarder, waiter, and fiddler, until one day when the servant girl was cleaning the rooms, she showed me a kind of sideboard which lifted up, and disclosed to my view the contents of a drawer, which was locked; there was £7. 10s. deposited in the drawer. I had no sooner seen this treasure than satan tempted me to take it, and decamp. I did so the same afternoon. I went and dressed myself in my best clothes, put my watch in my pocket, (this article was presented to me by Mr. W.) took the money out of the drawer, went to the railway station and took the first train for E., where I remained all night; the greater part of which I spent with two prostitutes, at an house of ill fame, drinking with them. In the morning I proceeded to G. and there I took the packet for Liverpool, and on my arrival I believe I had £4. left, which kept me in great style three or four days, among my old companions, which was soon spent, my watch sold, my clothing being exchanged for a worse suit with a little cash in return, and I then became once more an *outcast and a vagabond.* I remained in Liver-

pool a long time, being supported chiefly by dry bread, given me by my old play-mates about the neighbourhood where I formerly resided. There was also a bagnio very convenient, and the inmates soon became familiar with me, and often supplied me with food while I remained in that quarter. The mistress of this establishment I shall call Mrs. D., having to make use of her name at a future time. My being so long in Liverpool I naturally became very filthy, and in a most miserable condition. I however planned a scheme, and a very heinous offence it was, to return home, and break in and rob my own mother's house. I must here remark that at this period of life I was ripe enough to commit any crime; yet at the same time I was afraid of becoming a regular *reputed thief*, lest I should fall into the hands of the authorities. I then stowed myself away on one of the packets, which ply between Liverpool and G.; and on reaching there, I had the consolation to walk, and beg my way home, a distance of forty-six miles. When I got there, I found my mother still living in the same place, and I prowled about the place several days, seeking a chance to seize on my prey; but I was observed, and it was told my mother I was about the premises. It would be useless to mention all that was said and done in this matter, but however, I was admitted into the house, and once more received as the prodigal son, which was one of the many parables our blessed Lord related while He was upon the earth. Mr. G., the gentleman who got me into the last place of work, came and visited me; and from him I received a good reprimanding for my *wicked and undutiful conduct*; he at last promised to give me one more trial, and my mother consented to my living with her, until Mr. G. could get me employment; and during my stay with her I did not commit the horrible deed I purposed, though at the same time I pilfered, and sold many articles out of the house, to furnish myself with pocket-money. After awhile Mr. G. succeeded in getting me another situation, which was near Bilston, in Staffordshire. I was supplied with clothes and sent to Bilston by the train. On reaching my des-

tination I was kindly received by the clerk of the foundry, who being requested previously by Mr. G., had provided for me a suitable place to board and lodge. I was again steady for a considerable time, during which period nothing occurred except a change of lodgings, owing to the people of the house being so strictly religious, and unwilling for me to play upon the violin in the house. Now the iron trade suddenly began to fail and the consequence was, that the master discharged many of his hands; I was one among the number thrown out of employment; the clerk wrote to Mr. G., and informed him what had happened, and requested that I might be allowed to stay there, and he would get me employment at a foundry near Wolverhampton. The request was readily granted, and I remained in idleness as regards labour, but at the same time was very busy in serving the evil one, which you will shortly perceive. During my idle time, if I may so term it, I paid several visits to Bilston, my lodgings being at Highfield, and became pretty well known at a very noted public-house called the Prince of Wales, then kept by one Mr. C.; this was a reputed house for deeds of darkness and crime, which was so frequently committed there. The back of the house gave access to a very narrow court, having on each side a row of houses, the whole of them being dens of infamy and vice, occupied by prostitutes of the lowest grade, and many of them supporting men which are vulgarly called bullies. Being very intimate as before stated, and the Christmas week being close at hand, I was engaged by Mr. Connaway to fill the office of fiddler for a few days in the stead of a blind man who usually filled that situation, he being gone to visit his relatives. My heart was wholly bent on obtaining money to spend among my new friends, and to accomplish the same, I sold all I had that could be converted into cash, and after that was done I took a sovereign from the pocket of a pair of trousers belonging to a young man and fellow-lodger; but being found out, I repaid him by some means or other, and it was kept secret. The clerk got me work at the foundry near

Wolverhampton, and I went there to lodge, but after some time I robbed the people of the house of a sovereign, and made my exit with the same to Liverpool.—Reverend Sir, the remainder must be very brief, owing to the uncertainty of my stay in Chester Castle. I was in Liverpool for a long time, and being well acquainted with Mrs. D., whom I have already brought before your notice, I went to live with her as a sort of lackey. I committed many depredations, such as stealing dogs, and other petty offences, till one day, being in company with a girl who had robbed a man of some money, she got intoxicated, and I took the money from her; after doing this I kept out of the way all that day, and at night returned to the bagnio, but hearing great mirth within, I slipped round to the back yard, got into the same, and watched the proceedings. There I beheld two detective officers in company with two of the females of the house, who were carrying on a fine spree; my mind was then fixed; I waited till all had retired to rest, I then entered by the cellar window, went up stairs, and robbed them both of their money and clothes, and escaped; this was on the Sabbath morning; and as soon as I could make things convenient, I proceeded straight home to Scotland, whither I arrived after a few more hardships. I have not time to enlarge upon all that took place at home, but will make a brief exposition of it by saying I was again admitted into my poor dear mother's house, she having removed to another residence. Mr. G. now kindly said he would get me a berth on board a ship again, and I was to remain with my mother till my departure; but oh! reverend sir, the devil had me firmly at his command. My mother having occasion to go out for some time one day, and no one left in care of the house, I got in by the back window, and robbed her to the following extent: one gold watch and guard, one dozen silver spoons, three toddy ladles, one dessert spoon, one pair of sugar tongs, one knife and fork, all silver; one silver-plated bread basket, two salt cellars, two gold brooches, one miniature, set in gold; one pair of gold spectacles, one gold eye-glass, a time-piece, a

work-box, which was mahogany; and some handsome silk shawls. I escaped with my booty, and went back to Mrs. P. my old lodgings, and all was sold, and spent among prostitutes. I robbed Mrs. P. of £5., and got off with it. Now when this was nearly all gone I went to the railway station, intending to go to Glasgow, but was taken into custody, and I confessed to all I had done. I was tried, convicted, and sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment for both offences; and while I was in prison I began to think on God and religion. I wrote two or three letters to Mr. W., informing him that I was quite a reformed youth, so that he promised to get me another ship, when I was discharged from prison; he did so, and told me my mother had gone to New York, almost broken-hearted. The berth Mr. W. got for me was in a ship out of London, bound for Bombay. On our arrival at Bombay, all hands left the ship. I had now given up all thoughts of religion, and lived nearly two months in a state of awful depravity, robbing drunken seamen of their wages, or any other article in their possession. I returned to the same ship after a promise of more wages. We sailed to Madras, and from thence to Liverpool. When I reached Liverpool, the whole of my wages was stopped for my conduct. I now remained in Liverpool for a considerable time, in a most dejected condition. From there I walked to London, where Mr. W. had gone to live. This gentleman actually received me again, and boarded me in the Sailors' Home, and bought me a handsome supply of clothing, intending to send me to Australia, but I got again amongst the wicked ones; and now comes the end of my wicked life. I engaged in a ship that was going to New York, in opposition to Mr. W.'s orders, and the result was that he and I parted on very indifferent terms; and instead of joining the ship I went and sold all my clothes, and made up my mind to bid adieu to all my friends, and live entirely by plunder. I left London after awhile and returned to Scotland, and from there I came to Liverpool where I had been living with a

prostitute for a long time. Ever since I left London I have led an awful life of crime, having committed some daring and extensive burglaries and robberies, and I pray God will be merciful to me for the same. Reverend Sir, thus ends a concise and authentic abstract of the wicked and depraved life of your most humble and thankful servant, W. R.

It has pleased Almighty God, (my conscience bearing witness that I lie not), as far as I can recollect to incite my heart, to give to our much-respected chaplain, an abstract of my wicked life, for which I now stand self-condemned in the sight of God and mankind; and blessed be God's holy name, that through His mercy which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, he has brought me to a true knowledge of my sins by the influence of his holy spirit.—W. R.

THE LIFE OF P. D.

I was born in the year 1820. My parents were poor people and lived in C. of which place I am a native. When I was seven years of age, I was sent to the Rev. Mr. B. School, in Queen Street. My father was for a time a Protestant, but through my mother's persuasion, became a Roman Catholic. In this faith I was brought up. I continued at this school until I was about twelve years of age; and soon after this I lost my mother. There were five of us in family, three of which were living at home, at B. My father was given to drink, and left us all in a destitute condition, so that from twelve years of age I was left to get my living in the best way I could. One day I was in the market, and Miss C. sent me home with some flower-pots; this was on a Saturday. She told me to come again to my dinner on the following day (Sunday). She wished me to go to church, and I went. She then

told me to come the next day. She appeared to be interested in me and shortly after she bought me a suit of livery and employed me as her servant. After I had lived with her nearly twelve months, she told me one day not to go out into town as the cholera was very bad; against her will and unknown to her I went in my livery. This was at B. wakes. This was the commencement of my bad career. I did not return to my situation, but after I had spent all my money in drinking and debauchery I went home to my father's house, who was also a great drunkard. Had it not been for the common small alehouses, I should never have been brought into these troubles. In these I spent my money in card playing, dice, and gambling of every description, and was associated with a number of bad women of the town. After I had spent all my money, I went and slept in any out-buildings or stables wherever I could get, until I became filthy and as black as a sweep. Mr. H. from Abbey Court knew that I was in service at Miss C's., and seeing me in such a filthy condition, he called me to him and said, if he promised to get me back again to my situation, would I go and conduct myself as a good boy? I said I would. He then took me to Miss C's. and went in and spoke to her whilst I remained outside, and shortly after they both came out and ordered me in to get my supper. I continued with her a month or two longer. She was an excellent good lady, and was more than a mother to me; she would have made a man of me had I taken her advice. I always went to church every Sunday as my mistress was very particular in this, and we often had prayers in the family. One Saturday when returning from the market I met with one of my old companions who wished me to meet him at the Coach and Horses in B., as there was a raffle for a copper kettle that evening. I left my place again; I got drunk and never returned to my situation. Miss C. frequently saw me and asked me whether I was in work, I always said yes, at the same time I was not. I had now pawned my livery, sold my boots and hat, and spent all my money with

bad women. Shortly after this I was enticed away by some gipseys, and went tramping about the country. The first night I stayed with them was in Hoole-lane. They put me to lie on some straw under the cart. Before I went to rest the women came home with plenty of broken victuals of all sorts such as fowl, beef, mutton, &c., &c., which they got by telling fortunes. They spoke a language to each other which I did not understand. I used to put their horse and ass in a field at night, and was called up about three o'clock in the morning to bring them back again. If any hay was seen in the field I was always sent to bring it to the camp. I was frequently sent to pilfer beans, potatoes, turnips, and fowls, and anything else I could meet with. I travelled with them into Wales and into Warwickshire; we then returned again to Shocklach near Malpas. When one night they all got drunk and had a regular fighting amongst themselves, I ran away off to Chester. I went to Birkenhead and had about four or five shillings in my pocket. I started over to L. and got with a regular gang of thieves in Banister Street, at a lodging house. After I had been there for a night or two one of the lads asked me if I would purchase a pocket-handkerchief; he showed it me, I said it was the wrong sort, he then pulled out several others and asked me if any of them would do, I told him he had better pawn them. I knew he had stolen them. He did so, and on the following day, Saturday, I went into the market with several of them to see what we could pilfer. We had not been in long before we went and bought some fruit at a stall, and the woman that kept it shouted and fainted. The others left me and ran off to the lodging-house and I followed them, and I found they had picked her pocket and stolen from her £6. 18s. 0d., of which I received twenty shillings. I then returned to C. the following day and went to live with Mr. S. the butcher, in F. I did not remain with him more than about three months. I then went to live with Mr. S., in B. Street, as ostler. I was angry with my master, and after I had lived with him about

three months, I left him. I was then about fifteen years of age. Shortly after this I lived with Mr. C., at B., and bought old iron and stores. I was with him on and off for about three years, when I became acquainted with my wife. I was very fond of drink, which induced me to commit many small robberies, such as picking pockets, stealing from shops, going into confectioners' shops and stealing cakes, &c. Going down John Street one day, I went into Mr. H 's yard, and saw a large brass mortar; I bought it from him, as it was too heavy for me to carry, otherwise I should have stolen it, as I had many opportunities of doing so, and often tried, but could not lift it. I gave him 5s. for it, but it was worth £1. 11s. 8d., which sum I got for it from Mr. C. After this I went to work on the B. Railway. I then saved £5., a good suit of clothes and a watch. When I was eighteen years of age I got married. After this I bought a barrow and dogs, and went to fairs and races. I then commenced gambling, and every thing that was bad; such as fighting, drinking and stealing. I was a good boxer, and often got well treated for fighting, by rich and poor. I had often been in Chester prison for fighting, and getting drunk. I was convicted once at Knutsford, and got one month for stealing two sovereigns from a man that was drinking with me at Tarvin. When I was at Wrexham Fair, I got acquainted with Connolley. We came to Chester. We went to the brewhouse next to the Walls; it is just close to H.'s Brewery. We unlocked the door of a private house, with a false key. We searched the house, but could not find anything that we wished to take. Then we broke into Mrs. R.'s house, for which we were both convicted. We stole about £252. 2s., in money and plate. The night we took it, we went and hid the plate; the jewellery we stole, I threw away. We hid the plate in Garden Lane, near to the College. The third night after the robbery was committed, the servant-girl was taken up. She had informed Connolley where every thing was to be found in the house. Connolley was courting her. They lived in H., not in the same house;

and she gave him all information about Mrs. R.'s house. For this we were both tried, and sentenced to fifteen years' transportation; but we cleared the girl before the magistrates. I was so dreadfully distressed in my mind, on account of my poor wife and children, that I was quite tired of my life, and attempted to commit suicide in the dock, at the Town Hall, during my trial: it was with a razor, which I picked up in the City Gaol, and which I believe belonged to one of the prisoners. I feel now that it was through the mercy of God that I was not permitted to do so. I am thankful that I am spared, as it would have been an awful thing to have committed suicide. I do not say I will not attempt my escape again, as I am willing to suffer anything, any hardships, so that I may be with my wife and family again. I will lead a different life in future, for my own sake, and for the sake of my dear wife and children. I am quite convinced, if it were more generally known what hardships a transport has to endure, there would be less crime committed. The two years that I have already suffered, convinces me that no greater trials can possibly be endured by a human being. Death is far more preferable! I was removed from here shortly after my trial, to Millbank Prison, where I was kept in solitary confinement, but had several good books to read, which were the means of bringing me to think seriously of my past life; and what I had brought myself to. In consequence of my good conduct, I was removed with nine more, out of about 1400 prisoners, to Portsmouth, to the York Hulk. Here I remained for nearly twenty months. During this time I saw fourteen convicts so severely flogged, that the flesh came from the back-bone; and were immediately sent out to work again, with the rest of the convicts; all for bad behaviour. On one occasion I was present when a convict, by the name of Hatter, murdered our guard, James Connor. I seized the mallet out of his hand at the time, but it was too late, the poor guard was dead. For this, Hatter was tried at the Winchester Assizes, and condemned and hanged. I was still very unhappy; and whilst

many of my fellow-sufferers were fast asleep in their hammocks, I was thinking of my poor wife and children, and contriving in my mind how I could make my escape from this place. I was in the day-time working in the Gun Wharf, and there I picked up a file. I concealed it under my sleeve, and brought it in. The following night when all was still and quiet, I began filing the bars of the port-window of the ship, but dare not do much at a time, lest I should be heard. The next night I did the same. I generally embraced the opportunity of working at this when the tide might be coming in, and the wind made a noise, so that the guard should not hear me from the quarter deck. When I had finished a certain portion of my filing, I filled it up with brown soap, which was the colour of the paint on the bars. I found I could not get on so well as I wished that night, so I concealed myself under the hammock on the Thursday evening, when all the prisoners went to chapel; during this time I did a great deal of work towards getting the iron bars from my window. I had them all finished on the ninth night. I got up about twelve o'clock to get through the window and jump into the sea, but the tide was going out at a very rapid pace, and the wind was very high that I was obliged to give it up for that night. I was, as I suppose, seen by some of the prisoners putting in the soap. The next morning as I came up on deck I was stopped by one of the officers; one of them went down into my ward and found the iron bars had been cut. They brought me before the captain. They put a pair of cross-irons upon me; I kept them on and worked in them and slept in them for three months. They then shifted me into the dock-yard where they thought I should be more secure. But I knew better; for after my irons were taken off I resolved a second time to make my escape, for I could not forget my poor wife and children; they were constantly before my mind. I was determined to get some clothing out of some of the men-of-war ships, which were in the dock-yard. In this I succeeded and got a shirt, a cap, and handkerchief, and an old pair of

trousers. I concealed them in my own cell one by one at different times, and kept them in my hammock until I could find an opportunity of making my escape. I got up one morning about three o'clock, and dressed myself with the clothes I had stolen and put my convict's dress over them. At the time we mustered which was always about seven o'clock in the morning during the winter, the guard searched me and I passed. I got into the boat and was again detected—was called on the quarter-deck and was stripped naked. I was again ironed and put into the black hole, and was kept there fourteen days and nights upon a pound of bread a day and plenty of water. Seven of these days I did not see day-light, but the other seven days I was allowed to exercise an hour in the day. After the expiration of these fourteen days, I was brought out of the black hole, and when I got on deck I for the first time of my life *fainted*. The irons were kept on me; I was then under the doctor's care for about three weeks. After this I went to work as usual with about twenty pounds' weight of iron upon me for full three months. During this time, my wife came to see me. I was cut to my heart on account of her great distress of mind. She wept bitterly when she saw the heavy irons upon me, and told me that both her and the children were almost in a state of starvation, as the parish would not allow sufficient to support them. I thought to myself when I saw her, I will try again to make my escape for her sake and for the sake of my dear children. I could not rest night nor day on their account. After having seen her, I became more determined and desperate than ever. I was again set to work in the dock-yard with light irons. I considered a plan one night when in my hammock, and which I was resolved to try the next day, although I had several guards to pass, and a very long way to swim. I prayed that God would assist me through it for my family's sake. Consequently on the following night when we had left off work to go into the small boat, which always took us from our work to the ship, the York, which was on 25th of November; in-

stead of going into the boat, I ran up to the piles under the jetty, up to my middle in water, where I remained for about an hour and a half. When the boat was pushed off to return to the hulks I heard the guard say where is D.? I heard one of them say "he has done us at last, for he is not here." When they came on shore they were over my head and again exclaimed he has done us. They asked one of the soldiers whether he had seen one of their men, he answered *No!* All this time I was in the water. I was afraid to use my file to take off my irons lest the soldier above me should hear me; presently the *drum* on board the Victory was beaten, as is usual; I then began to use my file and got my irons off. As soon as it became dusk, it was very foggy, I began to strip. I uttered up a few words in prayer and cast myself into the water. The tide was coming in very strongly. I went at a rapid rate and had to pass by a guard, on board the Illustrious; and several other guards higher up the harbour. After I had been in the water about a quarter of an hour, I heard a gun shot; after this several more had been fired. I thought they were all coming to me. I then thought it is all up with me. I was alarmed. But I believe it was only in consequence of the Queen having visited Portsmouth that day; and they were taking down the standard. I was so much terrified at this shooting, that when I passed by the King George's Yacht, I fastened myself to one of the buoys. It was however, so very cold, that I was obliged to let go, and plunge again into the great deep. I ultimately landed at Polchester Castle, a distance of about five miles from the dock-yard. When I got out of the water, I was almost exhausted, and was forced to lie down for a considerable time, as I had nearly lost the use of my arms. I then started off naked; I think it must have been about nine o'clock; and travelled on some distance, when I heard footsteps of some one; and it struck me it was one of the guards on Portdown-bridge, where a file of soldiers are always kept. I returned back again, and went over a small hill, at

the bottom of which was a small river, about as wide as the Dee. I swam across this river, which I found much more cold than the Sea. I went over hedges and ditches, quite naked, until it came on day-light. I got into a pig-stye, and covered myself over with straw, and remained there till night, without food or drink, and several thorns in my feet, I then started off again, and travelled all night, until I got to a farm-house, and made way into one of the stables, where I found an old smock-frock. which I gladly put on. Here I remained all day. This was the third day I had had no food. I started off again; and going over Epsom Race-course, I saw a policeman; I turned down a lane before he could see me, and got into a cottage, where I found an old woman. I begged for mercy and pardon. She took me to the fire; she gave me a pair of stockings, a cap, and an old pair of shoes. I travelled on; but was so much fatigued, that I was obliged to go to a house, and beg for a bit of bread. I got some, with some cheese. On my way onwards, I saw a man with some cattle, going to London. I helped him to drive the cattle; and he gave me fourpence-halfpenny, being all he had. I wanted a night's rest, and went to a lodging-house on the road. I asked the woman how much my lodgings would be. She said fourpence. I had only then one halfpenny left; with this I bought some apples. I went to bed, and had a good night's rest, and started off early next morning, for London. When within a mile of the town, I stopped at some common, and there was a load of coals brought to a house. I got the coals in for them, and received sixpence and something to eat. I then went into London; and found out a man, whose brother was a convict. He gave me clothing; plenty to eat; and ten shillings to start me off. I started off the day after, and went by the way of the canal, until I reached Oxford. I stayed one night on the road. I travelled on to Banbury; and from there I went to Warwick. Here I got two shillings for taking care of some cattle in the Fair. Next day I got three shillings and sixpence, to take some cattle to Birmingham. I

had now seven shillings and sixpence, and laid it all out in steel pens. I wrote to my wife, and informed her where I was; I then went out hawking my pens, and cleared three shillings the first day. I travelled on towards Wolverhampton, and earned four shillings more, and got rid of all my pens. I wrote to my wife to meet me at Wolverhampton. In the mean-time I bought three umbrellas; I sold them, and was able to purchase five more the next day. At night, my wife not having arrived, I became very unhappy, and almost mad, as I found I was as badly off as ever. The following day, I went out again in the Newport Road, and there met my wife coming to me from C. It was indeed a happy meeting. We then travelled on together to Newport, where I carried on my hawking umbrellas. My wife soon returned to C. She contrived to get my children sent off by the parish, at B., but did not succeed. I received a letter to that effect from her. I then left the town; when, I understand, about half an hour afterwards Mr. H., Superintendent of Police, arrived there in search of me. Eager to get my poor children, I got nearer and nearer to C., within 20 miles, at W., where I again met with my wife. Soon after we had got our supper, two policemen came into the house; one through the front door, and the other through the back. I saw them both. They took hold of my wife. I heard her shout out, "Let me alone, what have I done?" At this I leaped over the garden wall, and went off to Wem. There I remained for about a week, and made my way on to Shrewsbury; from thence to Welshpool. It being market-day, I was in the market-place, when one of the police of the town came and asked me whether I knew P. D.? as he heard he was in town. I referred him to a man at an orange stand, and told him that he came from C., and no doubt would tell him all about him. I then made off again, and went to Newtown. Here I remained for a few days, hawking umbrellas; and I found that I was known by some persons that kept stalls in the market; so I soon left this, and went to M. C. Shortly after breakfast, I saw two policemen,

one from Newtown; I was afraid they were after me. I went out and shook hands with the N. policeman. He spoke to me, and appeared very much afraid of me. I got into the back yard, and started off for A. I afterwards heard that five officers came down, and took up another man in mistake for me. At night I arrived at a house on the road, where none of the family could speak English. I had to show them my money, and put my hand to my mouth, to say I wanted something to eat. Next morning I arrived at A. I went into the iron-works at C., where I got work at a Mr. C.'s, and earned fifteen shillings a week. I remained here two weeks, and got leave to go and get my wife and children. I started off; and in my way, I met with a man who hawked cloth. With him I went to Bala; on my way towards my wife, I happened to go with this man to an ale-house, where we met with a man that had robbed this hawker that I was with, of £5. I struck him for doing this; he said "Very well, D., you will remember this." I was shortly after this followed by about two hundred men, and was taken into custody, and was very ill-treated and beaten. I was asked my name. I told them it was James Edwards. Next morning I was brought before the magistrates, and this man that I had beaten was there. He told them who and what I was. When I heard it, I fainted, as I had not been able to see my poor children; all my anxiety was about them. I was immediately put into heavy irons. Mr. H. was sent for, and I was brought to C.

I did not rob S. E. W., but I think I know who did. I may tell this some day, but not now. I am sure it was one of the workmen. P. D.

I have received several letters from this convict. I will however give extracts from two only: the one addressed to me, and the other addressed to his wife:—

August 12, 1850.

"REV. SIR,

"I write this letter to you, hoping with God's blessing, it will find you safe at home, and in good health, as it leaves me at present; thank God for it. I was removed to Portland Prison. And from here I shall get my ticket of leave. I don't know; but they say I shall have to stop here three years before I go out with a ticket of leave. If the Government does not do something for me, they can send me out as soon as they like, now I have come here. They send all the prisoners here from Pentonville, and every other prison. This is the last place of discipline; so I would be very glad to hear whether you received any word from Government respecting the family. I have behaved myself in every respect, and with God's help, I will endeavour to do so. Rev. Burt was very sorry that he did not see you. We have got two fine ministers here. They are not frightened to cry aloud; and spare not. They lift up their voices like trumpets. They tell those that are not God's people their sins, and the house of Israel their transgressions. The head minister knows you well. He took his text from the 1st Corinthians, 15th chapter, 10th verse: 'By the grace of God, I am what I am.' I paid great attention to it; and he sent it home to my heart. Their hearts must be as hard as stone, if it would not strike terror to them. I am not what I ought to be; I am not what I wish to be; but I thank God, I am not what I once was; on my way to destruction: the same as Paul was, on his way to Damascus. I wish your reverence to inform the wife and children where I am at. It lies all to the gentlemen; they can get me out soon, if they like to interfere; for the governor and ministers of Pentonville Prison will do whatever lies in their power for me; so I hope your reverence will send me all the

particulars what you have heard from Government. I have no more to say at present; only I hope my poor wife and children are living as close to God as they can, for this present world is a world of sorrow to the best of us. I hope God will bless them, until it pleases Him to restore me to them. May God mark them with His grace, and the blessing of God be with them. Direct your letter for P. D., Portland Prison, near Weymouth. I remain your everlasting well-wisher in Christ, P. D.

Rev. Sir, I hope you will excuse my ill-wrote letter, for my pen was very bad, but my next letter will be written better. The proper way to spell Weymouth is Weymouth; it is in Dorsetshire. I hope you will send me word as soon as you can.

"The Rev. H. S. Joseph."

"CONVICT-DEPOT,
Fremantle,
WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

"MY DEAR WIFE,

"Owing to an order by the governor, that all men-prisoners who thought proper to send for their wives and families, had their permission to do so. You may be sure I have gladly accepted the indulgent and happy opportunity of having you and my ever dear children in my society once more; never I hope to part again, until death. My dear wife, I am well-aware of your heavy charge, especially in undertaking so long a sea-voyage; but once on board, the principal part of your employment will be to keep the children at school, and especially from climbing and looking over the ship's side, as I have seen the pensioners' children do, on board the Mermaid. I also caution you to keep yourselves as much as possible out of the sun's rays, when crossing the line, as it is very hot. And last and most important caution is, to keep yourself as much as possible from associating, gossipping, or quarrelling with

other women. As I was coming here I saw a great deal of it; and it was chiefly through the effects of drinking the wine which was issued for themselves and children. My dear wife, this is quite a different country to old England. There is no such things as pawn-shops or poor-houses here; there is plenty of money, food, and raiment for them that will work. The climate of this country is beautiful, and healthful. The woods abound with parrots and other birds of beautiful plumage. The water is good; and, except two months in the year, July and August, it is all summer. My dear wife, I urge on you to come out as quick as possible, with the first ship, as I will be ready to receive you and the children. I wish you to bring a few dozen pictures out, as they are worth a great deal here; and a few dresses, as they are also very dear. And silver watches, which only cost ten shillings in England, are worth fifty shillings here. Michael Delaney is here, with a ticket of leave. My dear wife, I request you to write before you embark, as the letter will come overland to me, before your ship reaches here. I conclude with my kind love to yourself and children.

"Your ever affectionate husband, P. D."

"Mrs. D."

THE CASE OF ELIZABETH P.

ELIZABETH P., aged eleven years, was committed for pocket picking. She says, I lived with my mother and step-father in P. Court, Liverpool. My step-father's name is R. I have been three times in the lock-up for picking pockets, and had once three months in the Boro' Gaol. The first time I ever took money was in Byrom Street; there was a fire in that street, and I saw a lady with three sovereigns in a purse. I went up to her and said, aye? do you see that woman on fire? I then put my hand into her pocket and took out her money, and ran

off with it. Betsey J. was with me; she lives in Liverpool and is now in prison. I used to dance in the theatre in Christian Street. They used to give me eight shillings a quarter. Many other boys a ndgirls used to dance with me there. It was P. that acted there. I used to go begging with another girl; she would watch outside whilst I went inside the house. I would take anything I could find. We have often picked ladies' pockets. One would watch, whilst the other picked the pocket. I used to give a good deal of my money to my mother. Sometimes I bought a new bonnet. My mother never said anything to me when I had it on. I gave my mother ten shillings of what I last stole; she did not say anything to me. Indeed if I did not bring money home she would scold me. I did not go much to church. I never prayed in all my life until I went to the gaol in Liverpool; that was in the chapel, I said "Our Father, which art in Heaven." I never saw my mother pray. I think if she had told me better I should not have been here. She never scolded me for stealing, but sometimes used to say, well Bessey how did you get on to day? My step-father was a great swearing and drunken man. Oh Sir, I hope the Lord will have mercy upon me. Mrs. Benion, the matron, has been telling me what a wicked girl I have been and that God is very angry with me. I am very sorry for what I have done, and I hope I shall never get into gaol again.

R. A. alias J. F.

I was born June 6th, 1832. My father was very fond and proud of me, and instructed me in the rudiments of a plain education, which he intended completing, but died in the midst of his labours. My broken-hearted mother removed to a relation in Liverpool, from thence to London to her brother's.

He sent me to an excellent school where I stayed two years. After leaving school I perused a vast number of novels and romances. I hardly ever went out of doors. I lived in a land of dreams. I was put to various occupations but nothing could please my fancy; at last I was bound to a surgeon, and while in his service I got entangled with bad associates. I absconded twice, frequenting the haunts of the metropolis. My master brought me before the magistrates. I was remanded on bail. I escaped justice by fleeing to Ireland. I returned. My uncle bound me a second time to a captain, who represented himself to be a kind gentleman and promised to treat me as a son; but I verily believe that his master the devil had not in his service a more active or zealous agent. I went with him two voyages to the East Indies, and I would rather serve one year in a prison than encounter those hardships and cruelties a second time. I was more than two years with this slave-master, who wanted to send me to the coast of Africa, but I dreaded the thoughts of perishing by the yellow fever; and having obtained some money, part of my lawful wages, I concealed myself in the house of a notorious associate till the vessel's departure. I escaped one misery to encounter another—penury and starvation in the streets of Liverpool; however Providence succoured me, and I obtained a situation on board an American packet almost ready for sea. I cannot account for the reason which induced me one day to absent myself from the vessel; on coming next morning to work, the mate, after a polite salute in satan's language, kicked me over the side and told me to go where I was the day before. I was thus again cast penniless, helpless, and friendless on a bleak and desert world. It was whispered to me *go and steal;* but no, no, the pious counsels of fond mother still rang in the ears of conscience. I was never yet so hardened as to entertain the thoughts of plundering a fellow-creature. I used to beg victuals from the ships in the day time, and sleep at night at the Asylum, and I never forget the scenes of wretchedness and misery and vice which I there

beheld, and in which I was compelled very unwillingly to become an actor. I lived in this manner better than three weeks, when I began to be sensible to the awful state of wretchedness to which I had brought myself. I abhorred my own flesh. I was covered with filth on account of my long worn linen, and the pangs of hunger gnawing my stomach. I fled from society into the country, being determined to beg my way to London and throw myself on the mercy of my relations. I picked up with another wretch like unto myself, and we shared what we got in begging. The first day I got as far as Warrington and stopped at the Union where I left my comrade who was very sick. The next day I passed on through Warrington, on through Wilderspool, till I came to St. Thomas's Church-yard. I *paused*—the bones of my departed father lay a few yards from my feet; the sunday school was in view where I was taught my catechism, and that Jesus Christ died to save sinners. I thought of my happy and innocent childhood, when I waited on my sick father, when I played with sisters in the green meadow, when I ran errands for my beloved parent, and at night when I crept up to the chamber of my sick father, and kneeling down at the bed-side, repeated my simple prayers; then my fond mother put me and my sisters to bed; and, after kissing our ruddy cheeks, she blessed us and committed us to the care of Him, who despiseth not the sighing of a contrite heart. As these thoughts flashed across my memory I felt some inward desire of seeking help from God, whom I worshipped in childish simplicity in the days of my innocency. Alas, alas, these good thoughts were only for a moment. I was cold and hungry; who cared for such a wretch as me? despair had bound my heart up in her icy chains. I then wandered to the cottage of my father; I knocked at the door; a man opened it. I recognised the face of our old landlord; 'I have naught to gie thee to day; come, be going.' If you knew who I was you would not turn me away. Was there not a doctor living in this house some years ago? 'Yea, what about

him?' I am his son. 'An your him as we used to call Frederick.' Yes I am. The honest man was so shocked that he could not speak for some moments. He called me in, and after questioning me and satisfying my hunger, he bid me make the best of my way to my mother, being glad to get shut of my wretched presence. I stopped that night at the Union again; next morning being the Sabbath, I travelled on and ate a few raw turnips for my dinner and breakfast. I felt as if I could lay down and die; for no man gave unto me, and some inward dread seized my soul of that place where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. I continued in this manner wandering about for some weeks (in the depth of winter). Some days I could obtain nothing at all, being too discouraged to ask. I slept on dung-hills, and in out-houses. I forged various stories, on purpose to draw out the compassion of the simple country people; and I became so accustomed to this practice and my lips were so full of guile, that I found it much easier to tell lies than to speak the truth; and I seemed to take a hellish delight in deceiving those whom I regarded with the bitterest feeling, when I beheld plenty everywhere around me, and I perishing with hunger and cold. I had opportunities offered me of enriching myself by theft, but conscience had not yet lost her influence over my heart. I had strong desires sometimes of seeking out some christian minister, and obtaining relief by explaining my circumstances; but some evil influence held me back. Of course I picked up with associates in these ramblings, and I was advised to commit some trifling offence and obtain an asylum in a prison for two or three months, and I thought this would be better than to perish in some ditch, but conscience seemed to upbraid me for such thoughts; but I yielded to the temptation *five times*. First, I was passing through a town one dark evening, cold and hungry, when I saw the kitchen door of a gentleman's house open; I entered, and espying a large loaf on a table, quick as thought, I whipped it up, and making my escape, soon devoured it; but strange to

tell, it did not satisfy my hunger. Second time, being in a village one evening, and having eaten nothing all day, I thought of trying a plan which had been recommended to me by a *fellow-wretch*. I walked boldly into a baker's shop, and asked for two pound of bread. A woman weighed it, and gave it to me. I began to eat it in sullen silence; she looked at me in pity, and said take it. I walked out rejoicing at my success, and when I had eaten it, I thought of trying the scheme somewhere else. Seeing some gingerbread in the window of a small shop, I went in and asked for a pennyworth; a woman gave it to me, and seeing me eating it without offering to pay for it, she began to abuse me, and sent for a constable, and said if I'd asked, she'd have given me. No constable was to be found, and a man coming in, she told him what had happened, who gave me two or three hearty kicks into the middle of the street, and so I escaped. About a week after this, I made another attempt, one evening, at a small shop in a town. I asked for a penny loaf, and breaking it in half, began to eat it, but a constable was quickly called in, who, taking the bread from me, marched me to the station; and after examination, I was locked up in a dungeon. Next morning I was brought before a magistrate; but nobody appearing against me, after a severe reprimand, I was set at liberty, and the piece of bread given to me. Fifth, and last time. I had now been leading this wretched life for more than three weeks, and the little flesh I had was fast disappearing from my bones; my clothes were filthy beyond measure; and I'd been obliged to cast away my shoes, which were no longer serviceable. In this miserable plight, I found my way back to Knutsford, having given up all hopes of ever reaching London. It was one Thursday; I had eaten nothing but a few raw turnips, and I went to the Asylum for a night's shelter from the cold wintry blast. When I was in Knutsford the time previous, I had been at T. Hall, and received some bread and meat; and on coming forth from the Asylum on Friday morning, I asked an Irishman, who was travelling to Manchester, to accompany me to the Hall,

and see what we could get. We did so, and got some bread and milk; but the master-cook recognised me, and threatened if I came there again, to give me in charge. The Irishman went on his way, but I stopped behind on the premises, feeling very disinclined to leave a place where I knew there was plenty to be had. I retired to a shed, where there was some straw, to consider—I must either die or steal—steal? no; father once flogged me for stealing a cake!—die? no; I'm not prepared for *that*; well, I must steal. I waited till dark. I went round the premises; tried a great many doors, but all to no purpose. I then went and lay down on some hay, to try to get a little sleep, but even that was denied me; the pangs of hunger, and the cold wind kept my eyes open. I lay here all night, and lost my cap, which fixed my determination to live or die in that place. It was the Sabbath; and the stillness that reigned around made me feel more sensible of my awful condition. When I felt my blood growing colder, I thought of *death*, and the *great judge*, and of *hell*. The thought occurred to me that I might get into the kitchen, at evening, before the door was locked. I determined to try, at any risk, as I must perish if I stopped where I was much longer. In the evening, while I was creeping about, I found out a stone-trough, which contained the refuse from the scullery, and I greedily devoured some of its contents, which appeased my hunger, but made me feel very sick. After this, I went to the kitchen-door, but hearing voices, I stepped back; after a little while, some persons came out, and shut the door; I crept up again, and finding all still, I gently lifted the latch, and entered in, and seized a sieve with some rice in it, and seeing a coal hole, I hid myself, and devoured my prize. The servants were about, and I happening to disturb the coal, was discovered by one of them, who gave the alarm, and presently a dozen stout lusty fellows came and dragged me from my concealment, and led me to the Hall, and began to question me; but I answered nothing. They then carried me to the stables, and gave me some bread and beer, and some horse cloths to sleep on; a great

many came to look at me; and there was much joking and laughing going on. Two men were set to watch me; one who feigned to be very sorry for me, and asked me a great many questions; but he turned out to be my enemy. He asked me my name; I assumed the title of one of my shipmates, as I did not want to have my family publicly disgraced. He also asked me if I did not intend robbing the house. I told him if I found any clothes that would fit me, or any money, I should have taken it; but as to plate, I would not dare to meddle with that. Next morning a constable came, who handcuffed me, and led me through Knutsford, capless and shoeless, to the lock-ups. Two magistrates examined me. I denied my intention of robbery; gave in that I belonged to Cork; and told a great many untruths, which added to my weight of guilt. I was taken to Knutsford, and the officer over the bath said, he never beheld a more wretched object. I was put in the Ward for some days; my head was completely shaved; and both officers and prisoners regarded me with surprise. At my trial, my friend? the groom, came and witnessed against me, that I told him I would rob the house, of *plate*, clothes, money, or any thing I could get hold of; the constable also witnessed that he saw me the Saturday previous, talking with some suspicious looking men, in the streets of Knutsford. I pleaded not guilty; as my motive for entering the house was to obtain food and clothes, and not to rob and plunder in the literal sense and meaning thereof. The magistrate who committed me, thus addressed me:—"It is quite evident to us R. A. what your intentions were in entering this house; and I strongly suspect you were concerned in a burglary, committed a few months since; and to rid the country of your further depredations, I shall commit you to Chester Castle, for the term of eighteen calendar months, hard labour."

"My Dear Chaplain,

"You are at perfect liberty to make what use you think proper of the above few lines. Old, and

wise, and experienced as you are, you may perhaps learn some instruction from them; at least, you must perceive that the mighty power of evil influences which satan has exerted over my soul for so many years, has not been able to destroy those lessons of virtue, which were early instilled from the lips of a fond and pious mother. When I see old, and grey-headed men, enter this gaol, I think to myself, what a good thing it is that I have borne the yoke in my youth, before my evil habits had gained a more maturer and stubborn growth. I trust I am brought to decision of character, and that I have not suffered so much in vain. I have learnt by experience, that the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; that the natural man receiveth not the things of God, because they are foolishness unto him; that we have to "wrestle against principalities, against powers, against spiritual wickedness in high places." I will tell you the truth; I am quite willing that every man, woman, and child, in the breadth of the land, should be acquainted with my history; if it would in any way promote the glory or extend the praise of that divine Saviour, who died on the cross to save sinners; who has washed me from my sins, and bought me with the price of his own precious blood. Whatever station He may please to call me to, I am determined, by His grace, to sanctify His Sabbaths, and study that BOOK, which I once despised. "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin," but what I have written is the plain truth, and if you should see anything wrong you must be charitable, knowing that I am as yet but a little wee child in Christ Jesus; to whom be glory, and honour, and praise, for everlasting. Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty.

"R. A."

Before we proceed to give the next Memoirs of three prisoners, Watson, Motram, and Martin, we must narrate an interesting fact, connected with a young man, about eighteen years of age; by the name of William Dawson. This young man was committed to prison for robbing an old fish-man, on the highway, at Oakmere, on a Saturday afternoon, about two o'clock. He always declared his innocency of the charge, and very frequently burst into tears, when telling his tale. He was waiting his trial about four months. The prosecutor swore, that he G. D. in company with two others, robbed him of all that he had, and then beat him severely. He said he could not be mistaken, he knew him well to be the man, because he had red hair. The jury, after a few minutes' deliberation, brought the young man in guilty. For this, he was sentenced to ten years' transportation. Immediately after the trial was over, I asked the old man to go down with me into the gaol, to see whether he could recognize any other prisoner, that might have been concerned in the robbery. There was one young man, with red hair, Motram; and my opinion was that he was the highway-robber, and not poor Dawson; that he, Watson, and Martin, were the three young men. We had a number of prisoners arranged in the yard; and amongst them, were these three. The old man however, would scarcely look at them. He said, he did not know any of them; and that he was quite convinced that Dawson was the lad, who robbed him. I became very uneasy about this poor boy, and sent for him into my office, and questioned him as to where he was on the day the robbery was committed. He was almost broken-hearted, and for some time could scarcely speak. He gave me a very straightforward account of himself, where he had been, and the persons who saw him. He arrived at Winsford about ten o'clock in the day, on the Saturday that the old man had been robbed, and remained at Winsford until the following morning. He had been for some time out of work. Was almost in a state of starvation. He went to Over, and commenced ballad-singing in the village; from thence he went to Winsford, and was ballad-

singing there; when he was told by some persons, that many of the poor people in the village were Methodists, and if he wished to be relieved he must sing hymns, and not ballads. He then sung what he called the "Angels' Hymn," and as I suppose, did his work so well, that Mrs. H. gave him food, B. gave him a penny, and W. took him to the public-house, where he collected three shillings. All this I put down in writing. On my return from my office, I met with a county magistrate, B., Esq., who evidently felt much for the poor lad, and asked me my opinion. After having heard all I had to say he immediately took out his purse, and gave me money, to defray a portion of my expenses, and begged, I would do all in my power to serve him. The following day I went to Winsford; this was on "Good Friday." It so happened that I found out all the parties, H., B., W., and others who knew him. I heard of an attorney in the village, and immediately called upon him, told him what my errand was. He very kindly took a warm interest in the affair, and had the parties before him, took down their statements on oath, all of which fully agreed with what I had before, viz., Dawson's own words. The attorney kindly did this without making any charge, and for which I feel truly grateful. I very soon returned to Chester, and about nine o'clock in the evening, I waited upon my lord judge, at his lodgings. His lordship very kindly gave me an audience—he listened very attentively to all I had to say. I then gave him the depositions, which he read over, evidently with deep interest. But, said his lordship, "how is he to be identified? I will think this over and will see you in the morning." The following day, at his lordship's request, I went over to Winsford; I saw the parties, and took them all back with me to Chester. About thirty prisoners were assembled in the prison yard, and in the presence of the governor and myself, the boy Dawson was immediately recognized as being the same who sung the "Angels' Hymn," on the Saturday, at Winsford. One declared that he had slept at his house, and that he had not lost sight of him on that day; another,

that she had given him food; and another, that she had given him money, &c., &c. All this was represented to my lord judge by the governor of the Castle; upon this the poor lad was sent for into court, and finally discharged, on his entering upon his own recognisance. To me, this was a great comfort and a cause of great rejoicing, that the innocent man should be set free. I received £2. 10s. for the poor lad, and then took farewell of him. A few weeks had passed away, when I received the following letter:—

"WINSFORD, APRIL 16, 1849.

"DEAR SIR,

"I now write to you, and do gratefully acknowledge your kindness to me in undertaking my cause after my sentence was passed to be transported, and the same time I was innocent; I must return you my grateful thanks for so doing. I have been home since I left Chester, and found my mother and two sisters in good health. She asked me where I had been, but I did not tell her, for fear it would make her uneasy. The money that I had given to me, I bought myself a suit of clothes, and the remainder I gave to her. I have not got any work at the present time, but in a short time I hope to be in work, and then I will write to let you know. I called at Mrs. Atherton's, and the rest of my friends at Winsford, to return my grateful acknowledgments to them for their favours to me, and I wrote this letter in Mrs. Atherton's. Please to return my grateful thanks to the rest of friends at Chester, for their favours and liberality to me. So no more at present from your humble and thankful servant,

"WILLIAM DAWSON."

I have since heard from him and he is doing well.

As I supposed, so it was. The three following prisoners, whose Memoirs, we are about to record, were the three persons

who robbed the old fish-man. Immediately on hearing this from one of them, I informed my lord judge, as I knew it would be a great satisfaction for him to know that the guilty parties were found out; and his lordship was pleased to send the following reply :—

"LONDON, JUNE 3, 1849.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I beg to thank you very sincerely for your information respecting the prisoner Dawson. Your exertions in the cause of justice carry with them their own reward.

Your obedient servant,

* * * *

We will now proceed to give the Memoirs of the forenamed prisoners, Watson, Motram, and Martin :—

Henry Watson, convicted for highway robbery and sentenced to twenty years' transportation, is a native of Hodnett, Salop, about nineteen years of age, not well educated; says, "I was brought up by a step-father, who was very kind to me and would have given me a good education, and wished to send me to a Sunday School, but I would not go. When about thirteen years of age, I went to Jamaica as a sailor, but would not continue with my captain, so that when I returned to England, I went to Manchester, and was employed at a coal pit; here I remained about two or three years, then went to another pit, belonging to a man by the name of P. About two years ago, the master came to me and told me, that there was an Irishman who would do my work for three shillings less a week; and so I lost my place. Shortly after, I

met this Irishman, and I got so mad at him for getting both me and my brother out of work, and got himself and his boy into our place, that I set on him and fought him. I was always very passionate and high-spirited in fighting. I broke two of his ribs; this was the beginning of my ruin; I was put in gaol and had to serve two months; this was in Manchester. When I was discharged, I lost all my friends. Out of work, in a state of starvation, clammed, I then stole a quantity of lead, for which I was committed for three months; shortly after this I met with Motram, we went together into a public-house; we then made up our mind to rob this man (John Norton, he is a huckster) and Motram knew him; the boy Martin lodged in the same house with us; we took him with us on the day we committed the robbery, for which we have been convicted. After this we committed a robbery at a warehouse, in Manchester, in Oldham Road; here we were disturbed and got nothing. I spent all my money at the King's Arms, in G. Road.

H. W."

Henry Motram, aged twenty-three years, convicted together with Henry Watson, for robbing John N., of £20.; says, "I was brought up at Kelsall, and went to a Day and Sunday School, and when about sixteen years of age, I went to live with a farmer named Thomas R., of E. After residing with him for about two years, I went to my uncle at Rotherham, and worked on the railway, earning about eighteen shillings a week. I spent nearly all my money in the public-house. I could never save any, although I was in constant work. A few weeks before Christmas, I went to Manchester, and fell in with Henry Watson. After drinking together for some time, he said, "I can tell you where we may get a few pounds if you like." I said, "I will go with you." We went to the weighing-house of

Porter's coal pit, and met with the man that keeps the machine, and we robbed him of £3. 5s. Watson knew that this man was in the habit of taking the money to Porter's, every night. On the Saturday, before Christmas, we robbed John Norton, for which we have been convicted. On Saturday, the twenty-third of January, Watson, and a man by the name of O., from Manchester, and I, went to Oakmere, where we met the old fish-man in the road; we beat him well, and robbed him of about twelve shillings, of which seven shillings were in pence. We spent this money, that is about five or six shillings, at Cuddington. When you brought the old fish-man to the yard, to know whether he knew any of us, *I knew the old man so soon as I saw him,* but I was sure he would not know me. On the following Tuesday, there was Watson, Martin, David O., myself, and a little boy, broke into a warehouse, in Oldham Street, Manchester. David told us that he worked at it, and that there was a good deal of money there; we got the little boy to conceal himself in the cellar, I don't know his name, and about nine o'clock at night, he opened the shutters; Watson went in; there was a good many clothes, but he did not take any of them; there was a tin case, which was very heavy, surrounded with water, and he brought it down; when we shook it, we thought it was filled with either oil or water; there was a patent lock to it, and we did not open it; we were disturbed by some nightmen and we made off. The next day I was taken up. I have never been in church or chapel, for the last six or seven years. I have lived a very bad life, and would always get to the ale-house whenever I could get money. All the money I got by robbing, was spent in the ale-house. Had it not been for drink, I should never have been in gaol.

HENRY MOTRAM."

John Martin, aged fifteen years; says, "I went to school. I am a native of the county of Kildare; my mother lives in

Mother and if I had taken her good advice, I should never have been in gaol. my father died when I was quite a little boy When I was about ten years of age, I came to England. My mother supported me until I came to Manchester, and then for about two or three years. I worked sometimes at home and others at a factory I earned generally about six and sixpence a week, at the factory. I lived in Blakely Street, at a lodging-house; after that I ran away from my mother, and got into bad company with boys, we then used to go about the streets, and robbed whenever we had the opportunity: we spent the money amongst ourselves; we often picked pockets; what we got was money. The people that I lodged with, A H., Charter Street; he knew that I got my living by stealing. Watson often wished me to go out with him, to rob at night; for a long time I would not go, at last I went with him; the first man I robbed, was Norton, in the highway, in company with Motram and Watson; this was on the Saturday evening, before Christmas-day. They gave me about £3. 10s.: we all spent Christmas-day at this lodging-house, in Manchester. In consequence of Watson and me falling out, I would have no more to do with him, until the night we broke into the warehouse. On the Saturday morning I was taken up. My real name is not Martin, (this was my mother's first name) but Lynch. I was five times in prison, in Manchester; the first time was for stealing three pairs of shoes; the second time for picking pockets; the third time for the same, the fourth time for taking money out of a drawer, in a shop; the fifth time for stealing cheese; for the first offence I was acquitted. I served altogether seven months and fourteen days in prison.

JOHN MARTIN."

William Mc. Carty, convicted for burglary, sentenced to seven years' transportation; says, "I was well brought up, and

received a fair education; was apprenticed to a shoe maker; my real name is Wyatt. When very young I got married, but through drunkenness, I lived in a bad state with my wife. I could earn thirty and sometimes forty shillings a week; the more I earned, the more I spent in drink; at last I ran away from home, and tramped through the country. After a month or two, the officers were after me, and at last they got hold of me at Watford, for not supporting my wife. They put me in a cart, and handcuffed me to it, it was a precious cold day; the officers sat in front of the cart, and we had all been drinking brandy and water. Before we had got a mile from the public-house, at Watford, I managed to break the wood of the cart, and made my escape with the handcuffs on me. I made off, and saw them trotting on before me, on their way to Uxbridge. I tore my black handkerchief off my neck, and put my hand in a sling; presently a hearse came up, and I asked the man to give me a ride, it was going to London. In getting up they saw the iron on my hand; shortly after they asked me to get inside the coach, I did so; they took me to Snow Hill, they then told me to be off, for they knew what I had on. I went to my friend's house, got the cuffs off, and then set on drinking again, and tramping. I went into Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Huntingdonshire, and so on until I got into this county, when I again got plenty of work, and plenty of drink, and one night, whilst in a state of intoxication, I broke into D's. house, at Sandbach, for which I am to be transported for seven years. I shall be glad if you will write to my wife, and tell her what has become of me; her name is Mary Wyatt, care of Thomas S., Chelsea, London. As regards my religious character, before I came to this place, I used to boast of my *infidelity*. I read nearly all Tom Paine's works, and used to sport at religion; but ever since I heard you preach, I have thought very differently about myself and of God, and I hope to lead a very reverse course of life for the future."

Thomas M'Evoy, seventeen years of age, was born and brought up in Manchester; says, "Mother has left me about six months ago; she has been a great drinker ever since my father left her, and went to America. I worked in a factory, and earned about seven shillings a-week; I worked in different factories ever since I was ten years' old. The first robbery I committed, was stealing lead from an empty house, and was sentenced to two months in the New Bailey. I used to go to chapel when my father was at home, he is a Roman Catholic; but I have never been to any place of worship since he left us, about six years ago. When I came out of prison, my brother kept me for a time. I tried to get work, but could not. I then went about, almost starving. When Friday came I wanted money to pay my lodgings; I then used to go and steal lead. I lodged with Mary W., in Butter Street, Oldham Road. Her brother used to purchase the lead from me; his name is R. D. near Oldham Road; he keeps a good many lads to go about stealing lead; he gives us about one half of what it is worth. and melts it; they call him one-armed D. This one-armed D. has brought me into all this trouble; it was he that persuaded me to go with Williams and Bob T.; Bob was related to C., into whose house we broke; for which I am now sentenced to seven years' transportation. For the last fourteen months I got my living by stealing lead, and old Bob T. always bought it of me. Old Dick D. would also buy as much as I could steal. Samuel D., Thomas C., and George H. D., are employed by old Dick to steal as much as they can, and he purchases all from them.

Joseph Williams, aged nineteen years. Father living in Ireland, (Drogheda); says, "My father has left me about three years. During this time (the summer months) I worked in the brick field; I earned about 20s. a-week. I then lodged with

Mrs. T., in Pott's Street. I always made this house my home. In the winter months I hawked goods about the country, and sold apples and other fruits, and got a pretty good living by it. About twelve months ago I was hawking sand; and then commenced my career of stealing. The first thing I was committed for was taking a wheelbarrow, and was sentenced one month to the New Bailey. When I came out, I went selling sand again, but I spent most of my money in D's. house; he keeps a shop in C. Street; he sells sand and other things; he always told me — and other lads to go and pilfer wherever we could, and whatever we stole we were to bring to him. I used to steal sacks; he told me where to steal them; I generally got them from farm-houses. I was never detected in this; I have stolen many dozens of them. He sent us, (i.e.) Jack G. and myself, one night to a farm-house, and there we stole a great number of sacks; he lent us a cart to put them in. He used to cut them up, and then sold them. I have never been to any place of worship for the last three years. Samuel D., Henry D., and a great many more young lads had used to meet me at Dick D's, and we all used to go out thieving. They generally stole lead, copper, and brass; and sometimes M'E. used to come. I think many of these lads are now in the New Bailey. We used to play at cards at Dick D's., and when we lost, he would send to the jerry-shop next door to his house, and get drink on credit, and then set us thieving to pay him again. Since I have been here, I have thought very differently of religion. I feel that I am a very great sinner in the sight of God. I hope to spend the rest of my days in a very different way. I have often prayed in my cell, since I have been here, that He would forgive me all my sins. I always like to hear you preach to us in the mornings, and so do many of the other prisoners.

F. J., thirty-one years of age; says, "I was born at Longford, near Coventry. I left this place when I was about

four years of age; we were sent to Wolverhampton by the parish. About five years of age, I commenced working with my grandfather; I used to drive the horse. I remained with him until about fifteen years of age. I never recollect going to any place of worship up to this time. I then went back to my native town. My mother wished to put me to the ribbon trade, but I ran away, and got to my work again. I was not quite twelve months at home. My mother was a religious woman, and used to take me with her to the Methodist Chapel, of which she was a member for many years. I then went on at my work, and never attended any place of worship until I was twenty-four years of age. I went on board a man-of-war, at Liverpool, and I attended public worship. About twenty months after this, I went on board another ship at Portsmouth, and there we were all discharged again. I afterwards went on board a merchant ship to Africa. We returned to Whitehaven. I received £18. I spent £5 there. I went by steamer to Liverpool, and there I spent £13, most of it in drink. I again shipped for Africa, in the employ of W. and D., Liverpool, and returned in about eleven months. I then received £16. 2s.; part of this I spent in Liverpool, and then went to Manchester, and spent the other part there. Here I fell in with the prisoner, Elizabeth M., and lived with her for five years; and worked at J. and W. B's. timber yard, and earned about twenty-five shillings, and sometimes thirty shillings a-week. I was discharged from this place about five months before I was committed; this was in consequence of having some words with the foreman. I then met Charles W. and we started off to go into Staffordshire; I had got threepence in my pocket, and he had a shilling. When we got to Altringham, we went to a provision shop, at Broadheath, and we saw some money in the till; we made up our mind to get it. About two o'clock in the morning we got a piece of iron from off a plough, and broke into the shop, and stole 11s. 6d., and some tea and tobacco. We sold the tea to a carter; he gave us

£2. 15s. for the tea and tobacco. For this we are sentenced to ten years' transportation."

W. C., twenty-four years of age, lived at —; says, "I have been a boatman since I was twelve years old; I got four shillings a week and my food. I have been a very great drinker, and lived a bad life. I have not been to any place of worship for the last twelve years not more than four or five times. I have been compelled to work on Sundays as well as other days; many others are obliged to do the same; I know a great number that are obliged to work on Sundays, and never go to any place of worship at all. I was once before this in gaol. I left this prison about a week after you first came here. I am now convicted for stealing coals, and sentenced to six calendar months. I am truly thankful for all you say to us, particularly in the morning services."

J. B., a native of M., about twenty-one years of age; says, "I was born of respectable poor people. When about seven years of age, went to a Sunday School; but from over-indulgence of my parents allowing me to do as I pleased, I neglected the school, and not until about seventeen years of age, did I become a regular attendant at the school; worked in a factory from the age of seven years up to the time I was committed to prison, being a period of about fourteen years. My parents being poor, they were not able to do much for me in the way of clothing, consequently I did not frequent any place of worship. I was induced to go to chapel, (new connexion); and from the singing and the society, was induced to go again a second and

a third time. I heard the preacher speaking about David and Jonathan; I was much struck with what he said, my name being Jonathan. From this time I attended the prayer meeting, but did not join the class meeting; I was then working at Mr. George Oldham's, where I met with several young men, who were given up to a religious course. I went with these young men and attended Mr. K's ministry; was then much devoted to religion. The young men took a great interest in me; they furnished me with clothing. In the course of about three months or more, I was admitted a member of the church, and continued a member about eighteen months, attended prayer meetings about five o'clock in the morning, with my fellow-workmen. In the course of time I became acquainted with an ungodly young man, who introduced me to a young woman. I became attached to her; she was a member of the Wesleyans; the attachment was mutual; she ultimately persuaded me to join her brother in visiting the ale-houses. I was then able to give my parents five shillings a-week for my support. I found I was spending too much money in the beer-shop, and was getting into debt. First, I pledged my watch to assist me in getting drink. I was no more to be found at the prayer meetings, although frequently called upon by pious friends; I took no more delight in religion, being still very often admonished by my minister and others. I then wronged my parents out of my weekly earnings; was then persuaded by this young woman to leave my parents, which I did for a time, and lived very economically in my lodgings, and was very happy. I had been three times asked in church, to be married to this young person. The week before I intended to be married, I fell out of work. My parents remonstrated with me about my marriage. I had turned myself out of work, and my employer would not at that time take me back. The parents of the young woman began to be annoyed with me. I left them; and said, 'if I get no work, you shall see my face no more.' Being in deep distress, I waited on the Reverend J. P., to know if he could send me to Australia. Finding I did not succeed,

I left him, and said to myself, I would go out free of cost. Having had words with this young woman, I left for Stockport; but instead of doing this, I wandered up and down the town. About midnight, I met with a person well known to me; he invited me to walk home with him; I did so, and we drank together; afterwards my friend went with me by the side of the canal, when I stopped, and demanded my friend's watch and money. My friend said, 'you are jesting'! 'No,' said I, 'I'm not.' Well, then, said he, 'we must fight for it.' I threw him on the ground, and took his watch and guard. My friend said 'don't hurt me.' I afterwards committed a burglary, for which I am sentenced to ten years' transportation. I feel the heavy weight and burden of sin on my soul. I cannot pray as I once did; I fear there is no hope for me. Do, dear sir, pray for me. I like to hear you preach; but I fear the sermons are like the seed sown on stony ground. I shall often think of that sermon you preached to us from Luke, 15th chapter, 7th verse. Oh that the Lord may convert my soul. I tremble when I think how much I have resisted the working of God's holy spirit, in my soul. Your watchword is engraved on my heart: 'Thou God seest me.'"

Wm. Dean, aged thirty-one, married, lived in Macclesfield, a native of the same place; says, "When a boy I attended what is called the Big School, as a Sunday-School scholar, but ran away from it. When about fourteen years of age, commenced picking pockets; and was apprehended for robbing a liquor vault. I stole from it about £8. or £9. Spent the whole of it with a set of bad young men, in a public-house; there were a number of them, and it did not take long to spend it. I left my parents, and lived at the Common Gate; it was a house of ill-

fame. The first time I was apprehended, I was acquitted. I supported myself at this house, by what I got in pilfering; the parties knew well how I got my money. I continued robbing shops of the till box, and several factories, but was not found out. The policemen generally suspected me, but I took care to keep out of their reach. I was taken before the magistrates several times, but always got off, as they could not prove anything against me. I then got into another description of stealing, which was lead; sometimes from large lead stores, and sometimes from the corn mill. I could always sell as much as I could bring; glaziers and others generally bought it from me. I sold it at 1s. 4d. per pound weight. P. P. was my companion; afterwards his brother William was my companion; both of them are now transported. Philip and I went on in this way for several months, at last we got taken, and got six months for it at Knutsford. The chaplain there was a very nice old gentleman, and often gave me good advice. When my time was up, I went and stayed with my parents for about two months. Afterwards I went to Manchester; I there fell in with a party of men in Blakely Street; we then joined together in picking pockets. I remained there about eighteen months. The greatest prize I ever got was £18. There were three of us in the concern; it was in the market place at Shude Hill; from a lady. I was then about sixteen years of age. We watched the lady at one of the fruit stalls; she had her money in a small reticule basket, wrapped in a purse; she laid it on the stall, and I took it out and gave it to one of the other men, and he started off with it; I and my companion stopped to purchase some fruit; and we were not found out. The money was fairly divided, and we all spent it in the usual way: namely, the public-house. It lasted us about a fortnight. I continued a few weeks longer in the same way, but was not found out, as I had ran away; but the other two were taken, and they got twelve months each in the New Bailey. I then went home to my parents, they were very glad to see me, and my mother was nearly broken-hearted at the way

I had been living. I stayed at home between three and four years, but still continued now and then thieving, and occasionally house-breaking. I was often suspected, but they could bring nothing against me to commit me. My associates in house-breaking were all transported; there were more than twenty of us; we were all Macclesfield men, and used to meet every day at some public-house or other; we used to meet ten or twelve at a time, but never above four of us would go at a time to break into a house; we generally used to look for silver, when we got it, we could easily dispose of it at Manchester, either at D. R's. or J's.; they were not shopkeepers, but used to get their living by purchasing stolen goods. I was at last taken for stealing a cock pheasant from a Mr. B., near Macclesfield. My companion Hodgkinson got off by informing of me; but they did not catch me for twelve months after the robbery was committed, since which time he has been transported. I was tried for this at Knutsford, and sentenced to seven years' transportation. I served between four and five years at Woolwich and Portsmouth, and was then discharged. I went home to my parents at Macclesfield; they received me gladly; this was at the time of the Wakes. In a few days after I went to my old master, and got work. I knew the silk weaving, which I was taught when a lad, and earned from twenty to twenty-five shillings a-week; my master was very kind to me on account of my father. I kept myself steady for full two years, and used to attend the Old Church every Sunday or nearly so. I had saved nearly £30. I had in the course of this time, formed an acquaintance with a young woman, and married her, after I had been at home nearly three years. After the first two years, I began again to be unsteady, and spent most of my wages in the public-house. My mother kept the £30. for me. I took a small house, and furnished it with the money I had in my mother's hands. My wife and I lived very peaceably for about two months, we then had words about my keeping pigeons, and so she left me, and went into Lancashire; she was absent about

three weeks, and then returned to me; we lived again together for a few months, but often had words, for before I married her she was rather a bad character, and I could not keep her from bad companions, both men and women. After she had left me the third time, I sold all up, and went and lived with my parents again. I spent all my money at the public-house, at different times. I then formed bad acquaintance again with my old companions. My wife came again; in fact I heard that she was at Congleton, at an improper house; I went over and took her from it, and brought her home, and took a house again. I got two or three pounds from my mother and friends, and furnished my house. We lived together about eighteen months, when she started off again, and took my child with her. I left my work and became perfectly callous about everything. I then received a keg of rum, which one of my companions had stolen from a public-house; with this we all got drunk; we were seen by the policeman; he came in and found the keg which had been emptied, and took me up. I was tried for it, and got twelve months to this castle; when I left, you gave me a Bible and Prayer Book, which my mother has to this day. I then gave myself up to wickedness, as my wife had sold all up and was living in Manchester with another man; I expected to have found her at home, after my discharge from prison, but when I had learned from my mother that she was off, I did not care what became of me. My clothes were all in pawn, I had no money, but was determined in getting some, consequently the second night, I went and broke into a public-house, called the Bowling-green Tavern; O. was with me, but has since been transported. We stole about nine pounds in money, brandy, and tobacco, which we sold for three pounds; I had six pounds, and I went to the pawn shop to get my clothes out. The same day I went to Manchester; no one suspected me. O. was suspected but was not taken up. In Manchester I remained about a fortnight. I then found out a plan how I might rob a factory, I went back to Macclesfield, to my old companion Henry O.

We went to a factory which belonged to Mr. G. O., about half-past eleven o'clock at night, and broke open one of the windows. There was a watchman in front of the factory, but he seldom went to the back of the premises, and here we stole eighty pounds' worth of spun silk: we sold it to a Mr. C., who kept a beer shop, for thirty pounds. Nothing was heard of this, and in two weeks after we went again and stole about sixty pounds worth, and sold it again to the same man for twenty-seven pounds. We spent most of the money in drink, some part of it I took home and spent occasionally. About six weeks after this, we went again to the same place, and robbed it of about sixty pounds worth more, we sold this also to C. for twenty-six pounds. The third time it was not found out, but a second party went to it; they got a little twice, but not much, as they were not up to getting it. There was a casement in the window which was generally left open. The silk was packed in bundles of about fifteen pounds' weight, we had a hook with us, and used to hook the bundles to the window, when we could take them out quite easy. About five or six weeks after this, I met with John B., and we went and broke into the house of Mr. T., a magistrate, and we stole therefrom a great quantity of silver spoons, &c., &c.; these we sold to H. R., at Manchester, for about £11. 10s.; we were not found out. The next factory we robbed, was Mr. Samuel Pearson's, from this we stole about one hundred pounds worth of silk handkerchiefs, and raw silk. We lost a great part of the raw silk; we had left it in an old stable, and it was found by an old woman who gave it up to the policeman. We intended going for it the following night, but as Pursell would not go with O., (who was again at large) and me, we went and got a portion of it. On Sunday morning it was found out. We started off to Sheffield with the silk handkerchiefs. We got from a man of the name of D., a publican, fourteen pounds for them; we then stayed two or three days in Manchester; then we went back, and the portion of silk we took and

sold it to C. for five pounds, at Macclesfield. After this I and B. broke into the house of Mr. Pearson, at Buglawton, and stole a lot of silver, and sold it to the same R., at Manchester. Then Michael Pursell, William D., and I, broke into Mr. P's. factory, and stole about two hundred pounds worth of silk handkerchiefs; we wrote to Manchester, to a man by the name of S., he came over and I shewed him a sample of the goods. We sold them for one hundred and twenty pounds, and took them over to Manchester in a gig, and there parted the money amongst us. S. bought them for Fenton, who was transported for purchasing them. S. was taken in Manchester and was acquitted, as he gave evidence. D. and S. were taken up for this robbery in Belfast, and got eighteen months each. I escaped and went up the country, and remained about Birmingham until after the Assizes, when S. was set free. I then went to Manchester to see him, and asked how I stood in that affair? He said I was all right, as he was going to leave Manchester for some months. I afterwards returned to Macclesfield, and in company with B., we went to Leek, and broke into a house and stole £30. and started back to Macclesfield and escaped. The next robbery that I committed was in company with Pursell and Parker. B. had been taken up about ten days previously for burglary. This burglary was at Bollington. We stole a small quantity of silver and a time-piece; the plate we sold at Macclesfield. For this we were all taken up. The time-piece we shewed to C., and he offered us £5. for it, but afterwards went and informed against us to the constable, and we were committed and tried at the Spring Assizes, and got fifteen years' transportation each. About six or seven weeks after the Assizes, I made my escape from gaol in the following manner, on a Saturday night:—I was determined upon going, and listened for the watchman coming round at nine o'clock. After he had been round I got a piece of iron from the loom in my cell. I then prized the door open with it, which took me at least two hours before I had accom-

plished it. After I got out of my cell, I went up stairs and began to look out the clothing; I knew the place well, having been there several times to change my own clothing. I took a a pair of trousers, a blue jacket, and waistcoat, and Mr. Kendrick's oil-case cap. I took a warp and brought my bed out of the cell; put the warp through it, and placed a piece of wood so that the warp could not get off. I then got up through the hole in the ceiling, and pulled all up with me; there was a little door above, locked, and I pulled the lock off, and got out on the roof. I made the warp fast at the little door, and threw the bed over the boundary-wall. I pulled it, and found it was not heavy enough to bear me. I then went and got a 7lb. and a 14lb. weight, and tied them on the other end of the warp, and threw them over the wall. I got on it, and slipt myself over on to the wall; when I was on the top of the wall, I cut the end of the warp with a knife I took out of the basket-place, and tied it to the other end, by which I let myself down; it was then getting near two o'clock in the morning when I got free. I went up Bridge Street, and saw St. Peter's Church clock; I saw five or six policemen, but none of them spoke to me; if any one had attempted to stop me, I am sure some one's life would have been at stake. I intended to have gone straight to Northwich, but lost my way through Chester, and took the wrong road. Early in the morning, I fell in with a man whom I had known for some time; he was going from Runcorn to Frodsham; he lent me a shilling. I then went and laid down upon some straw, in an outbuilding, near to Frodsham. I remained there until past eight o'clock at night, and had nothing to eat the whole of the day. I started off and got on a bye road, and there I saw a woman standing by her door; I begged she would let me have two or three pennyworth of something to eat; she let me have bread, butter, and buttermilk. I travelled all night until I reached Northwich, which was about one o'clock in the morning of Monday. I then laid down to rest in a field for a few hours, and so made my way for

Holmes Chapel. I got refreshment again at a farm-house, for threepence. I travelled on for Congleton, where I reached at about ten o'clock at night. From there I proceeded to Leek, and went to my brother-in-law's house; my sister, as soon as she saw me, fainted away. I got plenty of food here, and a change of clothes; I told her I had made my escape from prison. She gave me ten shillings, and went to Macclesfield to tell my father where to meet me, which was at Hipstones. He met me there, and brought with him a pair of shoes that would fit me, having no others than those I brought with me from the castle. My poor father was very glad to see me, and gave me a sovereign. I then had all I wished for, and started off very comfortably to Buxton; here I met with some of my old companions, and spent with them all the money I had. The next morning I left for Bakewell, with one shilling in my pocket; here I engaged lodgings, although I had no intention of staying there. I told the people, that same night, I had met with a young man who wished to take me with him to Sheffield; this was not true. I left them all right, and went out of the town, and laid myself down for a short time in a field, and returned again to Bakewell about twelve o'clock at night, and broke into a public-house, and stole about five or six pounds and some plate. I broke into this house with an instrument called a jemmy, something similar to a crow-bar, only turned up at the end. I brought also two bottles of brandy away with me, and made the best of my way to Sheffield. Here I sold the plate for about six pounds to one Mary E., who at that time kept a public-house in S. Street. I remained in Sheffield about a fortnight. It was the May fair. I dare not venture out in the day time. I knew there would be many persons who were acquainted with me. I used to go out when night came on with my old companion, A. P. We were fully engaged in picking pockets, and succeeded very well. He went home to Leeds, and I to Chesterfield, and here I again broke into the house of a druggist, and stole about

eleven pounds; the parties were from home. I obtained access to all the drawers with keys P. furnished me with. I returned again to Sheffield, and after a few days, went to Worksop, and there I committed a burglary. I broke into a house, and got about ten or eleven pounds, which I took from one of the tables, in a bag. I searched the house through for plate, but found only a small quantity. I then made off to Retford; in the course of the day, I bought seven pounds' weight of silver, from an old friend, H. J., and afterwards sold it in Sheffield. I gave him thirteen pounds for the lot, and sold it for £15. 8s., and so I cleared more than two pounds. After this I went into Nottingham; here I again met with another old acquaintance, M. O'N. I knew him when at Manchester. We had frequently been engaged in gambling and swindling. We started the old game in this place. I used to be on the look out for a stranger, and when I found one, I took him with me to the public-house, where my companions were, and then used to gamble until we got all his money from him. We did not attempt any burglary in Nottingham, as they were too much on the look out, there having been many houses broken open in this town. I met one day one T. M'C., who had in his possession about four hundred pounds' worth of watches. I took him to Sheffield, where he sold upwards of one hundred pounds' worth, to a man by the name of B.; the remainder he sold to a person in London. A. P. often visited Nottingham. He came from Leeds. I went out with him picking pockets; he was a sharp clever fellow. Myke and I went from here to Birmingham, where I met with several old acquaintances, and we continued our plan of gambling; we committed no robberies here. I went to Sheffield in October, and Myke went to Hull; I was then left to myself. I went to Rotherham, and in that town broke into the house of Mr. T., a linen draper. I intended to have taken a quantity of silk, but was defeated in consequence of leaving my keys behind me, at Sheffield; I always hid my keys in the chimney. I did

not get much of the drapery goods, but got a dozen silver forks and half a dozen new waistcoats; I obtained for them altogether about eight pounds. I remained in Sheffield until the winter fair, and during the fair, I was engaged in picking pockets, in company with A. P. and Reading Jack. In the course of this week Myke returned from Hull; I left the last two and joined him. After the fair he and I went to Woodhouse, and there we broke into a house, and stole therefrom some plate, for which we received between eight and nine pounds. We got away to Sheffield, and there sold several things. The following night we started off to Leeds; Myke went to the same shop I had been into in the morning, to sell some stolen plate, although I begged him not to go, and he was taken. I did not wait to see him taken, lest they should also take me. He was tried at the York Assizes, and was sentenced to ten years' transportation for it. I saw all this in the newspaper. I then went to Bradford, for the fair, and met my former old companions, A. and Reading Jack. I also met a woman here that I knew very well. We joined in robbing persons in the street; she used to get hold of drunken men, and rob them, and I released her from them. She got one night £7. 5s., and the next night fifteen pounds. We remained in Bradford, until the day before Christmas, when we both went to Halifax market; here she picked a man's pocket of thirty-eight pounds. I was very dubious of this woman, and was determined in finding her out, if possible; I saw her run away from a man; I went to him, and asked him if that woman had been robbing him? as I saw her running away. I told him quite a contrary way to which she had gone. He said she had stolen from him two ten-pound notes, two five-pound notes, and eight sovereigns. I left him, and went to her, and said 'come Nance, we must be off;' and when we got into a lonely place, I said, 'how much have you got,' she swore she had no more than eight sovereigns; but after I swore that I would strip every thing off her body, she gave up the notes.

I then said, I would go with her no more. She went back to Bradford with me, where her fancy man was; he and I had a good fight, but this was soon settled. Soon after, I committed another burglary, in Bradford, by myself. I did not get much, having no candle with me; I was poking up and down the house with a piece of paper burning, until the man of the house saw me, and called out, and I went off. Soon after this E. B. and I stopped a man travelling on the highway; we heard he had a great sum of money with him; we got thirteen pounds from him We committed several robberies after this in different houses. I broke into a house at Bradford, by myself, and there I got about twenty-six pounds, and some silk handkerchiefs. I left B. at Bradford, and proceeded to York, in company with Myke N.; and within three miles of here, we broke into the dwelling-house of Lady W. and stole about twenty pounds in cash, and three pounds' weight of silver goods, and returned back again to York. The silver we sold to T. W., in Leeds. Here it was I committed the last robbery, which was in company with a whole gang. One of our women stole a watch, and about ten pounds. Then I met with J. O'B., and got to drinking night and day. I went home with Mykey; he took all my money from me, £8. 10s., and went off to Manchester; I followed him, and there I was taken, and brought back to Chester Castle. When in Manchester, I met with a number of my old partners. William D., being the man who was tried with Fenton and Sharples, and was sentenced to eighteen months, at Knutsford. Thomas C., Manuel Reed, and D. said, 'We should like to go with you, Will, as we have no money, and are determined in having some, but we have a good job before us, it is at a man's house at Macclesfield, who keeps a shop, and he is secretary to a Loan Society.' We all intended to go in masks; there is to be Myke, White, Roberts, Doran, Clews, and Man. Reed. They were to have gone on Sunday night, after the Friday that I was taken, February 16th, but I believe the robbery was not committed until the

28th. I am now in duty bound to say, that my poor parents did all in their power to make me an honest man; and they would not, I am sure, take one penny from me if they thought I obtained it unjustly. They are strictly upright and honest, but I fear my conduct will hurry them to the grave; this is the greatest trouble and anxiety which stays upon my mind. I should be very glad if you will be kind enough to write to my poor parents when I am gone from the Castle, and tell them how much I feel for them, having brought such sorrow and disgrace on their heads; and I sincerely hope God will be their helper and defender through life, and should they hear from me again, I trust it will be to tell them God has been pleased to change my hardened heart. I hope I shall be a better man than I now am, before I die; I do say my prayers every morning and night, which I never did before I came here. You have told us many good things. I only wish many of my old partners could hear you, I believe it would be a great benefit to them. They are a wicked set, and never go to church. 'The Lord have mercy upon us all.'"

The following lines we will give, *verbatim et literatim*, as received from the prisoner W. C., (page 65). He says, "when I came to this place I knew something of religion, but never practised what I knew. I thank God that I have heard the truth preached to me in this prison—yes, the truth as it is in Jesus. I shall ever look upon this gaol as a school, for having brought me to Christ. I have written these lines for you to make what use you think proper of them. May God make them a blessing":—

CHRISTMAS DAY.

To-day is born a Lord and Saviour,
Jesus Christ, the Son of God,

Whose humble birth-place was a manger,
O can Christians bear the thought.

Let us then, to every nation,
The birth of Jesus Christ make known;
To all of them of lowly station,
A Saviour, Christ to-day is born.

Let us to Him our gifts impart,
And his name adore,
Who came to heal the broken heart,
And preach the gospel to the poor.

Prisoners, too, let us rejoice!
O hear, the Word proclaims
The Saviour comes without a price,
To free us from our chains.

MERCY FROM GOD.

O God, thou hast great mercy shewn to this my perishing soul;
O God, make all thy glories known thro' Jesus Christ our Lord;
O God, I cry for mercy still; hearken to my call,
To enable me to do thy will, and Jesus Christ's my Lord.
May I be found when I am called, prepared to meet my God,
And dwell with Jesus Christ in heaven, the great and mighty Lord.

THE CROSS OF CHRIST.

The cross of Christ procures our pardon,
Come, sinners, he would have us know
Tho' our sins be red like crimson,
It will make them white as snow.

The cross of Christ, the sinner's triumph,
Upon which his precious blood was spilt,
His pain, his agony, his bloody sweat,
All for the weight of human guilt.

The Cross of Christ, in his crucifixion,
Denotes the cross not made of wood;
And for our sins there's no remission
But through the shedding of his blood.

Christ, the author and giver of all grace
To them that ask and seek his face;
To them whose souls are dead in sin,
Free grace he gives, oh! come to him.

"ALL HAVE TRANSGRESSED."

Help us, Father, or we'll perish,
Save us from the wrath to come;
And with thy grace our spirits cherish,
For the sake of thy dear Son.
All have transgress'd, the word thou'st spoken,
And thy commandments set at nought,
But Christ upon the cross was broken,
And with his blood we all are bought.

"OUR OLD MAN IS CRUCIFIED, THAT THE BODY OF SIN MIGHT BE DESTROYED."

Come, let us all, with one accord,
Begin and put our trust in God,
For He's willing to save all that come
Through Jesus Christ, his only Son:

The Lord our God, who reigns above,
A God of mercy and of love,
Pardon He'll grant to all that come,
Through Jesus Christ, his only Son.

Come, let us pray to God above,
In words of penitence and love,
That he will finish the good work he begun
Through Jesus Christ, his only Son:

P. W. aged 31 years; says, "I was convicted in 1851, for burglary at Macclesfield, and was sentenced to ten years' transportation. This was the first time I was ever convicted or sent to prison. I am an Irishman, and have been in this country since 1848. I was in the 12th Regiment of Foot, and got my discharge in this year, on the 6th of February. I had been a soldier seven years. I was discharged on account of a reduction which then took place in the service. I then got my living by being a labourer, and earned about fourteen shillings a-week. After about three years' labouring, I was falsely convicted for house-breaking. God above knows that I am as innocent of the charge which was brought against me as a child. If it were the last word I should ever speak, and I take God to witness what I now say, that I am perfectly innocent. I was, for this false charge of burglary, transported for ten years. I left this prison about June or July, 1851; I was sent with other transports to Wakefield Gaol. Here I was about nine months, and was sent from here to Dartmoor Prison. I was only here between three and four months. We were working out on the Moor; it was a dark day in the harvest month; my gang had left, without me; it was a very rainy day. Being left behind, through the mistake of the officer, I made off through the Moor, until I got to Exeter. I met a poor man on the road, who asked whether I was not one of the Dartmoor prisoners, and how I came to get away with their prison-dress on me? I told him that I was making my escape; that I had neither friends nor family nearer than Lancashire; and that I was perfectly innocent of the charge for which I was transported. He said if I would go with him, he would give me a suit of clothes to put on me. I went with him, and he gave me a pair of trousers, shirt, handkerchief, cap and coat, also a shilling. He said he did not know how soon he might require the same help, as he was an old poacher. He recommended me to a Mr. W. in Exeter, where I got work immediately as labourer to the bricklayers, and got eleven shillings a-week. This was about two

days after I had made my escape. I worked here about a month; I drew my money, about fourteen shillings, and went to Worcester, and worked at the New Asylum there, and had work for seven weeks, at twelve shillings a-week. From this place I went to Birmingham, and wrote to a young woman at Macclesfield, who is now my wife; and she in reply, said that I was to be sure and come at once to her and her family, and no one would ever split on me. In this town I had the banns published by the name of P. G., and got married. Here I lived with my wife for two months, when her brother and I fell out. He was the former prosecutor, and said he should again inform against me. I said he should never do it without some provocation. He and I fought together, and I handled him very severely. A lodger of his took part with him, and they both set to and tied me with a cord, hands and feet together. One of them then went to the Town Hall, and one of the neighbours came in and set me at liberty, and I thrashed my brother-in-law well, and made my escape from there until the evening. When my wife came from her work I told her all about it; I asked her to leave the back door open, and I would return to her in the night, and I did so. I asked her what she had done with my clothing? She said she had left them in the bottom cupboard. At five o'clock in the morning I got up, and went in search of my clothes, but I could not find them. I then broke open the cupboard door, for the purpose of seeking for my clothes; at last I found them, as I then thought, and I took them off with me and went to Stockport. When it became day-light I found I had got the wrong clothing, as they belonged to one of the lodgers in the house, and were not mine. I took lodgings in Stockport, and gave the clothes to the landlady for her to pledge them. She brought me 9s. 6d. for them. I told all about it, and how I came to leave my home. I only remained in Stockport one night, and went to Manchester, and remained there from the second week in Advent to the second week in March; and from there I went to Hanley, in the

Potteries, and worked with a bricklayer until July. This was about a week before I was again apprehended. I returned to Macclesfield again, to fetch my wife, and as soon as her brother got to hear that I was in town, he went to the police-office and lodged information that I had been in the town. When I heard of this, I started off to Congleton; here I was to remain until my wife was to come to me on the Sunday morning. A man by the name of M. informed my brother-in-law where I was, and I was taken at once, at my lodgings. I was charged with stealing out of the dwelling-house, and was sent to prison; was tried at the Assizes, and got ten years' transportation."

LETTERS FROM PRISONERS.

* * * * *

"REVEREND SIR,

"The uniform kindness with which you are always ready to listen to me, and the other poor unfortunate individuals who are incarcerated in the precints of this Castle, and that feeling of philanthropy of which you are possessed, have stimulated me to make an humble and respectful address to you, Sir, hoping at the same time that I have not taken too great a liberty in so doing: and to proceed at once to the point, my object in thus appealing to your goodness of heart is, to know if by your powerful influence and intercession, you could obtain for me a mitigation of my sentence of imprisonment, at

the approaching Sessions. I can confidently assure you that my sorrow and contrition, reflection and repentance for my past transgressions, are beyond your conception or my description; the solitude of a cell is the place for experiencing sorrow, with its keenest anguish; but how beautiful is the couplet of Cowper:—

'That path of sorrow, and that path alone,
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown.'

"You know, Sir, what it is to be a father. I need not tell you in how many forms my wife and children have vividly appeared before me in my mind's eye; and the sad bereavement of my dear little girl has caused me endless thought and deep reflection, from which affecting cogitation I turn to my Bible and find the following comfort:—

'Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let thy widow trust in me, verily it shall be well with thy remnant.'

"I most fervently hope by divine grace it will go well with them during my temporary absence. Fifteen months seems an almost interminable length of time for me to be parted from my dear wife and family, and to be imprisoned for that time for my first infringement of the law; nevertheless I find consolation in a verse composed by the celebrated John Bunyan:—

'For though men keep my outward man
Within their locks and bars,
Yet by the faith of Christ I can
Mount higher than the stars.'

"I hope that this confinement may be the means of causing a complete reformation in my future conduct in life, and making me pay more attention to the comfort, happiness, and spiritual welfare of my wife and remaining child. I ought probably to mention that your upright character as a man, your profession as a minister of the gospel, and your interesting zeal and kindness always shewn to all the prisoners generally,

collectively and individually, cause you to be in the sight of my sole earthly dependance for this desired object—mitigation. Hoping that you will be so good as to make the attempt, and the attempt being made, trust that the event will be crowned with success. I leave all in the hands of Him who will hear us if we call upon Him, and who of his goodness can do all things.

"I remain, Reverend Sir,

"Your most humble, obedient, and obliged servant,

"T. K."

"CONVICT PRISON, WAKEFIELD.

"DEAR SIR,

"With pleasure I take the liberty of writing these few lines to you, particularly when I know that I have the liberty of writing to so worthy and reverend a gentleman; it is to you that I am indebted for the benefits which I receive from our Lord Jesus Christ; for while I was with you, my heart was first opened to the Word of God, but it had not taken root until I came here; but thanks be to God it has taken firm hold now, for our ministers are so kind and attentive, that they spend their whole time and their health for our good; we have a lecture on Scripture every day. When I first came to Chester, I did not care whether I heard the Word of God or not; but now, thanks be to His Almighty Providence, I could sit the whole day to hear it.

"Our minister is giving us a lecture this week on the goodness of God; he has taken his text from the 116th Psalm, the 12th and two following verses; and this I believe to be one of God's mercies toward me, in bringing me to this place; it was the charge that was laid against me that brought me hither, but

the hand of the Lord was in it, bless his holy name; for after about fourteen years of a sea life, without knowing or hearing the Word of God, I do not think I was three times in the House of God. So, Sir, you must judge how ignorant I have been of the Word of God. I do not suppose that I was on shore more than a fortnight at a time, and that was spent in drinking and rioting; but I now perceive that I must be ever your debtor, for the benefits I received while I was with you. I have nothing to offer you but a contrite heart, and I hope you will receive your just reward from God; and those who are daily labouring for our benefit. Dear Sir, I cannot express my feelings towards those two reverend gentlemen, for their kindness to me and those that are here. I was at the Lord's Supper on Christmas Day, and I hope I will ever keep the vow I have made, with the gracious help of our Lord Jesus Christ. I do not know how long I may remain here, but thank God it is the best thing that ever happened to my soul. I beg leave to offer my heartfelt thanks of gratitude.

"I am, dear sir,

"Your most humble and obedient servant,

"J. J."

"P.S.—I had almost forgotten to say that I had received a severe hurt since I came here; but it is all for the best; God deals with us all for the better. Blessed be his holy name."

"MARTON.

"REVEREND SIR,

"Having promised to write to you, I now take the liberty of doing so, hoping these few lines will find you well, also Mrs. Benion. I am happy to say we are all well at present,

thank God, and are still living in the same place. I was much surprised to find some of our old and well-known neighbours laid low in my absence; but all these things we may say with the afflicted Hezekiah of old, 'Good is the Word of the Lord concerning me.' I hope I shall be enabled still to put my trust in that Providence who doeth good to all his creatures. I shall now conclude, and leave the time to your own convenience to write.

"From your humble Servant,

"E. H."

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"Reverend Sir,

"It is with feelings of pleasure I now take up my pen, in order to fulfil my promise I made to you when under your kind care and attention at Chester Castle. I well remember what you said to me respecting my removal from Chester Castle; and I have found your words correct. I am at present amongst sin and wickedness of the worst description; but thanks be to Almighty God, I am kept from it by his grace, which I have found to be all-sufficient in every time of trouble. I have made the Word of God my chief companion, and when I come from my work I take my Bible in hand, and read a chapter or two; and I do assure you I derive much comfort from the same. As regards my worldly circumstances, I am a poor unfortunate convict, and am often led to exclaim—Oh! that I had some one to do something for me. But, kind Sir, I live in hopes that God will open a way for me. I know that 'He is a present help in every time of need.' He has said:—'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.' Blessed be God, I have found his promises to be true. Since I left you, I have

often thought of that morning when you took us to the chapel, in order to commend us into the hands of Him who made us; and I well remember your saying that a dark cloud hung over our heads; and believe me, Sir, I have proved your words as being just, yea so dark and obscure that I have not been able sometimes to penetrate it; but I hope, kind pastor, you will remember me at the throne of grace. Since I left Chester, my friends have petitioned for me, but I fear to little purpose, their influence being but very small. I am given to understand that the authorities do mitigate the sentences of prisoners, and send them back to the gaol where they were tried. If such were to be my case I should be very happy, and think I was coming home.

"The prisoners whom you have under your care think themselves badly done to; but I assure you if they were to spend their time on board a hulk they would find a wide difference; but I cannot speak my mind on this point, so therefore I must forbear saying more. Amongst all the prisoners which left Chester, there are only two of us here. I was very sorry to hear of my late employer's death, Mr. S. Sir, you will greatly oblige me by informing me how that J. D. is, of W. He was liberated from Milbank twelve months ago, and I heard he was again apprehended, and sent to Chester for trial. In conclusion, I humbly hope you will be kind enough to answer this epistle at your leisure; and you will oblige,

"Your humble servant,

"J. M."

"Convict Establishment,
Dartmoor, Devon.

"Dear Sir,

"I now take the liberty of addressing to your reverence a few lines, sincerely hoping you will not consider me too

bold in doing so, because I know you are a very considerate gentleman on the part of a prisoner. When I read over the Book of Joshua I often think of the lectures we received from your lips, and particularly when I come to the seventh chapter where we find poor Achan had an evil eye; he coveted that cursed thing that caused the destruction of all that was with him. And so it is to this day, for the policeman, A. L. has cut his throat because he had done such great wickedness and sinned against God. Now, if we look to our past lives, I find that after a certain time, it pleases God to give a man up to himself, as was the case with A. L.; for it has been my daily prayer that God would make it painful to his conscience as a grain of sand would be to the eye of a human being, until he had told the truth concerning the matter, it being well known that he made the two men swear falsely against me, and that it was done merely to get a ride over to Chester.

Dear Sir, I spoke of your lectures, and I hope and pray God will give you strength and health to go on in your good work, and that He also will bless your labours; as for myself I cannot say that I have been well since I left Chester. Should you feel inclined to enquire into my deportment, you will find there is no stain whatever against me since I have been here. I hope your Reverence reminds my fellow-prisoners of Psalm 34, v. 8. 'O! taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that trusteth in Him.'

"I remain,

"Your humble servant,

"P. C."

Some time ago I had occasion to inform one of the prisoners that it had pleased God to take his dear child from him—that he was no more. It was a most painful duty I had to perform. I shall never forget the poor man's looks. "Oh, Sir," said

the poor afflicted prisoner, "is he dead"? Yes, I said, it has pleased our Heavenly Father to take him from you. "The Lord have mercy upon me," said the poor man. I kneeled down and prayed with him, for himself and his poor afflicted family. Shortly after he left the Castle, I received the following letter from him :—

"I consider it my duty to embrace this opportunity to return you my sincere thanks for all you have done for me. From the melancholy information I received from you when in Chester Castle, of the death of my only son, which took place last November, claimed from me my attention to my much-bereaved mother, wife, heart-broken brothers and sisters. Yes, my dear sir, what must have been my feelings? None but those who possess the pure feelings of a tender parent can imagine. I, without language to express myself, will leave you to judge what my feelings were. Yes, when that news was brought to me in a cell, it was then I knew that soon, soon his little feet have trod the skyward path, the seraph's road, that led him back from Satan to God. It was then I reflected on your kindness, and I hope I shall never forget the very kind prayer in praying to God at our parting, to guide our hearts to the true knowledge of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

"It was then that I, with a renewed heart, on my bended knees, and with eyes lifted up to heaven, exclaimed—'I have greatly sinned; I will not offend any more.' Dear Sir, I have not forgotten your kind lecture on the effects of intemperance you gave before our trial. I felt that I had caused an aged mother, at a time when her grey locks hung over her silver brow, to weep for her son; caused the bereaved and affectionate wife to sigh for the day that will never return; caused the heart of a brave and generous brother to throb with all the fervour of an excited feeling. I pray to God that he may turn my heart to the wisdom of the just, to quicken me, who is dead in trespasses and in sin. In a short time I shall be far

away in another country. I shall not forget our pass-word: 'How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?' My Bible shall be my companion; and I pray to God to grant you health and strength to enable you to inculcate those true principles of religion to others. So no more a present from yours, &c., &c.

"J R."

"PORTLAND PRISON.

"DEAR SIR,

"Pardon the liberty I have taken in addressing these few lines to you, but I feel it my bounden duty to return my sincere thanks for your kindness in placing my feet in the way that leadeth to eternal life; but when I take a retrospective view of my past life, and of the undeserved mercies of my Creator and Redeemer towards me, (if my heart is not deceiving me) I may truly unite with the psalmist David, and say 'Bless the Lord, oh! my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name;' yet I must confess that I have been lingering full of restless desire to know if such sins as mine could be forgiven, sins committed against light and conviction of my own mind; but I find though desperate my case has been, there is mercy sufficient to pardon all my guilt, through the atoning blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sins, upon sincere repentance. And these promises are the words of Christ himself, who has said, 'whatsoever ye shall ask in my name that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son;' and again, 'he that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.' I have found by happy experience, that—

'If six-and-sixty prayers are past,
Pray on and never faint!
A blessing surely comes at last
To cheer the drooping saint.'

And thankful I am to say, that I am still seeking the one thing that is needful, upon which depends my eternal happiness; for I find if I could enjoy all that the world can boast of, and was destitute of this one thing (the salvation of my own soul) I should be but a miserable creature, for in Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; for He is all in all to the believer; and believe me I still bear in mind your watchword 'Thou God seest me,' as well as your sermon on the words 'be sure your sin will find you out.' Dear Sir, please to return my sincere thanks to Eleanor Ford, for her kindness in sending me the present (a book), and tell her, I will keep it as long as I live with the greatest care. I further wish you to give my regards to Messrs. Wright, Hoare, and McDonald, and also my kind schoolmaster Mr. Williams, for all his kindness towards me, and I thank God for all the good I now enjoy, and have enjoyed through his instructions. May the Lord bless and enable you both to impart such truths to the prisoners under your care, that they may leave you as disciples of Christ, is the prayer of your

"Most humble and obedient Servant,
"R. T."

"P.S.—Please to send me an answer, or a line or two, that will cheer the heart of your, I trust, penitent convert."

"WAKEFIELD.

"REV. SIR,

"It is with feelings of gratitude that I now write to you, trusting you will accept my humble thanks for your kind advice and fatherly exhortations, during the time I was a prisoner in Chester Castle. The day previous to my departure

from Chester, I promised I would write to you, and thank God I have now an opportunity to fulfil that promise. On the morning I left Chester, I was in very low spirits, and when I arrived at Wakefield Prison, I thought my heart would have broken; but through the blessing of God and the kind treatment of the officers, I soon became reconciled to my fate. Often while pacing my lonely cell I have thought on the words of your text, 1st of Kings, Chapter xix, verse 13., and asked myself the question, what am I doing here? I dare not answer. I have frequently and with profit, thought of some of the many illustrations which you used to give, in order to impress a knowledge of religion upon the minds of your hearers; one in particular was so vividly impressed upon my imagination that it will never be erased, it was the description of the happy home of a sober religious man, and the cold miserable dwelling of a drunkard; and if God permits me again to be free, I trust through His Almighty grace to enjoy in reality, the first part of the picture. I am now, thank God, very comfortable, and as happy as any man in my situation can possibly be. I have made a ruling machine, and many other little matters since I have been here, in fact I am what is called 'a Nackler.' I do a little of every thing, and that is what I like.

"You said you would very likely visit us at Wakefield. I should be very glad if you would do so before I went away. I am sure our chaplain, the Rev. R. V. Reynolds, and our assistant-chaplain, the Rev. A. Sherwin, would make you very welcome, for they are both good and talented gentlemen, and would be glad to see any person that would call for the spiritual welfare of the prisoners. Our surgeon, Mr. R. W. Milner, is a scientific gentleman, and I am happy to say gives me a great deal of valuable information; in fact he is a living encyclopædia, for you cannot touch him upon a wrong letter, and he is as willing as he is able to give information. If the head is the seat of knowledge, and knowledge requires space, and I stop here twelvemonths longer, I shall require a larger hat than when

I came here. Please remember me, very kindly, to the good governor, to Mr. Williams the schoolmaster, and the rest of the officers of the Castle. I shall always remember them with feelings of pleasure for their kindness during the time I was with them, and may God give you health and strength to enable you to continue for many years in your good work, is the fervent prayer of

"Your humble and obedient Servant,

"W. T."

"CONVICT PRISON, PORTSMOUTH.

"REV. AND DEAR SIR,

"The governor having kindly granted me a special letter, I avail myself of the opportunity to write to you, in order that I may thank you for the uniform and fatherly kindness with which you treated me when a prisoner in Chester Castle, and also for the interest which you have taken in my most unhappy case, and for the exertions you have made on my behalf; and believe me, dear Sir, that although your intercessions have not met with that success which we fondly desired, yet the feeling of gratitude towards you is as strong in my heart as if they had been successful, and I shall ever retain the liveliest remembrance of your kindness in whatever station it may please an all-wise Providence to place me. During my stay at Pentonville I was, comparatively speaking, comfortable. The Rev. Mr. Kingsmill and the Rev. Mr. Bert were both very kind to me, which I attribute to them seeing what an interest you took in my case when you came to see me; Mr. Kingsmill was particularly kind in lending me some excellent books, in which I took great delight. I was removed from Pentonville to the public works at Portsmouth on the 5th February; and as you will naturally expect, as a first-class prisoner, have by the grace and help of God passed thus far through my probation satisfactorily; and hope by His continued mercy and help (with-

out which all our own works are of no avail) still to be able to give satisfaction to all placed in authority over me. I wrote to my friends desiring that they would try another petition, praying that I might either be sent out of the country at once as a ticket-of-leave-holder, or that I might be allowed to remain at Pentonville prison until I could be so sent out, but they write me that they think it of no further use again to petition; under these circumstances I have, since I heard from them, entered my name on the governor's books to be sent out as a prisoner, and fully expect, if the governor finds upon investigation that my character is satisfactory, that I shall be sent out in the next ship, which will be most likely this month. My dear Sir, I do most earnestly desire that you would again use your influence on my behalf, as most likely by your writing to the chaplain of this prison that the governor and authorities might be induced to select me as one of those to be sent out in the next ship; as I feel sure that I should be far more comfortable if sent abroad, especially if sent to Western Australia. The companions among whom I have here to work are really very wicked; those who are sent abroad as prisoners are selected by the governor for their general good conduct, I therefore should have a better chance of meeting with better companions.

"My dear Sir, I should esteem it a very, very great favour if you would kindly write me a few lines, as I feel almost as one without a hope in life except the hope in death. I do also most sincerely hope that you will write to the chaplain on my behalf,

"And believe me ever,

"Your most obedient humble Servant,

"S G."

"DARTMOOR, DEVON.

"REV. SIR,

"I humbly hope the contents of this letter will be ample excuse for my presumption in addressing you, being assured of your good nature and humanity towards those un-

happy individuals, who through vice and dissipation have made shipwreck of character and virtue, and by it made themselves objects of disgrace and become friendless slaves, transported from their native country and from dearest friends, of which class of persons I call myself one; but through the grace and infinite mercy of Divine Providence, being led to repentance for my manifold sins and wickedness, I verily believe that all old things are passed away, and are become new; and I heartily thank God that his Word or working arm has been made bare, and that I am still a living monument of his mercy to praise Him; but, Rev. Sir, it is really and truly very distressing to me to hear my poor father's out of employ, and more especially to think that without the intercession of some kind friend in my behalf with the Secretary of State, that I must be sent out of the country, well knowing that my health is so much impaired; I should never more behold those dear parents on earth under such distressing circumstances. I most humbly implore you, Rev. Sir, to petition the Secretary of State that I may serve my time in England. If it should please the Lord to spare such an unworthy creature that I may, at the expiration of it, be enabled by my industry to help to maintain those parents, who I have caused almost to drop into the grave with sorrow; and for which favour, Rev. Sir, it shall be ever remembered with feelings of the deepest gratitude.

"I remain, Rev. Sir,

"Your most humble and obedient Servant,

"T. B."

[*From the same to his Parents.*]

"Dartmoor, Devon.

"Dear Parents,

"I was much grieved when the books came that I had no money here to pay the carriage, and before I could let the minister know, they were sent back, otherwise

he would have advanced the money. Give my sincere and heartfelt thanks to the Rev. Mr. Joseph, for I feel greatly indebted to him for the many kindnesses I have received at his hands. I was sorry to hear my poor mother was unwell, but I trust by this time she is restored to health. Let your chief care be, to serve God, then He will make all your wants His care; let not your hearts be troubled about this world's goods, for the world will fade away with all its riches and grandeur; but you have souls which must exist hereafter, and it requires you to be cautious in the path you are walking and suffer nothing to come between God and your souls; be very jealous of whatever may damp your love, or check your faith in Jesus; never neglect prayer, for that is the chief thing in bringing your mind to your Maker; let the clock be your monitor, to remind you that the time flies away and you cannot call one moment back, but will have to give an account of every moment you have spent since you began to reason and act. If a voice was to sound in your ears 'prepare to meet your God, for this night your souls will be required of you'; how would such a solemn warning answer your case? Are you prepared to examine yourselves, and see how matters stand between God and your souls on the one hand, and between your souls and the world on the other? See whose interests you have uppermost in your heart, and what are your first thoughts in the morning and your last thoughts at night most generally fixed upon. Are you looking to God or the world for comfort and peace? Can you leave your bed a little earlier to pray to the Lord for the help of His Holy Spirit to guide you through all the temptations to which you are exposed? I hope I shall not incur your anger in exhorting you; nature compels me, for I too truly see the fruits of sin. I feel a pleasure, when the time has passed away, that I may enjoy the opportunity of writing to you; but there is one thing for me to consider, am I that much more prepared for eternity? and how much of that time have I devoted to the Saviour? have I hope that God has pardoned my sins? Then how mer-

ciful this is! How adorable is His marvellous grace, to pluck such a brand out of the fire! And yet I feel so cold, so formal, and lifeless, doing so little good for Him who has done so much for me. What a vile sinful heart! What base ingratitude, to such amazing goodness! Oh! that I could gain more victory over my corruptions, more thankfulness for the mercies I have received, and a frame of mind more spiritual! How long have I been mourning over my infirmities, and must I have yet cause to mourn over the same defect? How of designing and pursuing a closer communion with God? But what a poor progress do I make, save in desires and endeavours! but I will study in seeking the Lord! He is my only refuge! He has promised assistance to all them that seek him diligently! I remember how long I lived in forgetfulness, and in horrid contempt of God, as though I had been independent of Him, or He unworthy of my notice. How long was I in seeking my happiness in the pursuits of this world of vanity, without inquiring, where is God my maker? Let us now seek that grace which is promised to them that seek the Lord. We have all gone astray, but let us now return to the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls. I must conclude, and when we meet, may it be in heaven or better prepared. I send my kind love to John and Betsy, and I hope the receipt of this letter will find you all in good health, as, thank God, it leaves me at present. Send me word, in a long letter, as soon as you can, how you all are and what became of the books; with my kindest regards to the Rev. Mr. Joseph. So no more at present from

"Your undutiful Son,

"T. B."

[*From the same, to the same.*]

"DARTMOOR, DEVON.

"DEAR PARENTS,

"I take up my pen once more to write to those that are now and ever will be dear to my memory, and though fate

has decreed that we should be separated for a while, I still have hope that it will not be for ever, if it should be so, I do not repine; I place my trust and confidence in God. I say I place my hope that He will yet restore me to you, my dear parents, the thoughts of whom makes sad remembrance bleed at every vein; in Him I trust, who is able, and willing, to comfort and succour those that are in affliction. I hope, my dear parents, that you build on the same foundation, and then you may rest assured the building will never fall, though it be assaulted by the artillery and severe attacks of Satan and his host, still he will not prevail; and by marching steadily and purposely along the narrow but straight road, it will lead us poor pilgrims to those realms of bliss where a blessed Redeemer has gone before to prepare for those that follow and place their reliance on His never-failing promises, which he sealed with His blood. 'Dear parents, I hope this will find you well as touching your moral affairs, although I fear I cause you many tears of sorrow at this time, when I ought, as in duty bound to be, lending an helping hand to support you in your old age; but, dear parents, do not grieve for me, as I think, by the blessing of God, I shall be restored to you again on earth; and if we do not meet again on earth, I hope we may meet in heaven—' where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.'

"Please to give my kind love to my sister and her loving husband, and my kind master, and all enquiring friends, and accept the same yourselves. Please to send me word about my master and the Rev. Mr. Joseph, and it would be a great consolation to receive a letter from them; and may the blessing of God attend all your honest endeavours on this earth, and when he calls you hence may you enjoy a blessed and happy eternity is the prayer of your now absent son. So, trusting to hear from you soon, I conclude with

"Remaining your unfortunate Son,

"T. B."

[*From the same.*]

* * * * *

"DEAR PARENTS,

"I take the present opportunity to write to you, my fond endearing parents, hoping it will find you in the enjoyment of good health, as I am at present. I hope and pray that my sister is safely got over her accouchment, and that she will not forget to return thanks most heartily to that ever-flowing fountain of divine favour; and I hope that her husband is well, and that they will live and pass this troublesome life in comfort and connubial bliss, and bring up their offspring, the darling pledges of felicit love, in fear and admonition of the Lord. I hope, my dear parents and relatives, you do not make yourselves uncomfortable on my account, for what I am now undergoing I most richly deserve; it grieves me to think that I have given occasion for an unfeeling and scornful world to throw their insinuations on my poor innocent and blameless parents; but do not heed their reproachfulness, for you may rest assured that it is none but the scandalous and evil-minded persons that will be guilty of such gross ignorance; and you may say and rest assured that if their good word has no credit, their bad word will be no disgrace. So, my dear parents, do not grieve for me; although I am cast out from society, I am not shut out from having communion with my heavenly Father, in whom I trust; and if I am not at large, so true it is that I am not acting so conspicuous a part as I used to do on the worldly stage of sin and vanity; and if it should please the Almighty God that I be restored to you again, I will let a calumnious world see that there is good comes of calamitous misfortunes and adversities; they shall see by my life that it was good for me that I was afflicted; for before that I went astray. And if we do meet to spend our days together on earth, by God's blessing, I will repay you for all the troubles and sad anxieties that I have caused you, by contributing to your happiness and comfort as

much as possibly I can, and assist you in the time of your old age as you did me in my infancy; and if we do not meet on this earth, I hope we shall all meet in those happy regions of eternity, where grief and mourning cannot enter: and there sing our songs of happiness in the company of those blessed followers of Christ, that have long since passed through this valley of woe in a much more troublesome and thorny path than that which we have had: for, had as my lot is, I deserve it all. But there is those that have suffered much in this life, and have met with a violent death, all for the sake of the love of Christ and his precepts. Then how can such an unworthy wretch as I am repine, since I deserve all I meet. So, my dear parents, endeavour to lead a godly life, and put your whole confidence in Christ, and we shall be united together in this happy way of thinking when we place Christ at the helm, and he will steer us to the desired haven of bliss where all trouble and anguish cease. My dear parents, sister, and brother, I hope this will find you all in good health, and hoping you will answer this as soon as you can, adieu, adieu, adieu to all persecutions: and remain [illegible] all [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible]

T. F.

[*From the same.*]

"SHIP EQUESTRIAN.

"MY BELOVED PARENTS,

"I have been looking for an answer to my last correspondence, with considerable anxiety. I thought that I should have been able to receive another letter from you, before leaving this country; but the time has at last arrived when I am to leave this place, and bid adieu to my home and country, perhaps for ever. Yet once in the midst of these gloomy forebodings, and while the eye rests upon the agonizing scene of such a separation, the sweet whisper of hope cheers and animates me. You can see on the head of this letter, the name of the ship that is to convey me to my far distant home, and as I cannot possibly state the name of the place where I am destined to, you may rest assured that you shall hear from me as often as I am allowed to write. All the remuneration that I can make, at the present, for your goodness to me, during a life of trouble that I have been to you, is to pray to the Lord to give you peace and happiness in this life, and guide you by his all-powerful hand to that harbour of repose where toil and trouble never enter. I love my parents, brother, and sister, and at times it robs me of my stronger feelings to think of such a long separation; but I put my trust in God, and he is good to all that put their trust in him, that my health may keep good; and when this time of trouble and misery is past, if possible, I will return to ask your blessing and forgiveness; and I pray most fervently that God in his all-gracious mercy will spare you to see that day. My dear parents, rest assured that distance or time can never alter the deep affection I feel for you; and though about to be separated by the boundless ocean and thousands of miles, I have yet strong hopes that I shall better my condition, and assist and support you in your declining years. Wherever I go to, you may rely upon it that I shall do all in my power to gain the esteem of my superiors, and gain that liberty which I trifled so lightly with

when in possession of it. I must now banish all regret and weakness from me, and summon all the strong feelings I possess to tread with firmness and resolution the rugged path before me. I am well convinced that there are heavy trials and privations lie before me; but the thoughts of home and those whom I love will fire me with zeal to accomplish all difficulties, however hard. Dear parents, if you intend to give me a few parting words, (and how comforting they will be to the heart of your banished son,) direct to me with all speed, for I cannot tell the hour I shall be off, on board of the Equestrian convict ship, Plymouth, or elsewhere. So I conclude, and the receipt of this carries with it my long and sad farewell, and my love to my brother and sister, and yourselves, and may it find you all in perfect good health and happiness, as it leaves me the same at present, thanks be to the giver of all things for it. Give my respects to all friends. So no more from

"Your absent Son,
"T. B."

"MILBANK PRISON, LONDON.

"REVEREND SIR,

"I write my humble letter, hoping it will reach the hand of a friend, not having one in the world, except it be yourself. This is my first letter since I took my disgraceful trial; and I am happy to inform you, Sir, that it is the first I ever wrote in my life, and I write it with my whole trust in God, and his blessing with it; and may it be a prosperous letter, for I have no other friend to help me out of this disgraceful trouble; and, Sir, I feel that I have no occasion to doubt your promise. I must inform you, Sir, that I have neither father nor mother to help me. I am like a wreck deserted by her crew. But I trust God has provided me a friend, when others

have proved false, (and those I have no need to mention), Sir, you know to whom I refer. I well remember the words you spoke to me previous to receiving sentence, and, under all circumstances, it may prove for the best in the end; and I trust in God it will be so, for He is shewing me those things which were hidden to me before, when I have been going through many a bitter night, and my hard earnings have been spent in some play-house or other. Sir, I feel assured that it is the blessed Lord who has taken me by the hand, for He knoweth all things. When it shall please God to set me at liberty, and my health and strength preserved, I may give God thanks that he has enlightened me in those things which I never should have believed if I had not been brought to this. Sir, I write truly from my heart, I never was happy in my mind on sea or shore by what was told me when I came home from my voyage, but passed it off as false; but now the truth is brought to light, thank God, and when I shall be released, with His help, I shall go to sea with a contented mind, and a new man in every respect; and, Sir, I am not like a person without a trade; I am almost sure to get a ship going to some part of the globe, particularly as I can hold the station of boatswain as well as sail-maker. I trust my poor child is in heaven, and, by the kind providence of God, I hope to be with him some day. Sir, I should feel happy in receiving a line from you when it is convenient. I now conclude with my whole trust in God that you will intercede for me, being a poor friendless prisoner; with God's blessing, and my kind thanks for what you may be pleased to do for me. Please to give my respects to Mr. Hoare.

"I remain your humble Servant,

"J. W."

"PORTLAND PRISON.

"REV. SIR,

"I take the present opportunity of writing this letter to you, hoping it may find you in good health, for so, by the blessing of God, it leaves me at the present. I have, this long time past, thought of writing to you, but have deferred it till now, for I well remember when we were at Chester, how gladly you would receive a letter from any of us; there are several men here with me who desire most affectionately to be remembered to you, particularly Thomas Bently and William Beasty. I shall never forget the sermon you preached on the third Sunday previous to the Assizes, March, 1851. Your text was taken from Numbers, chapter xxxii. the 23rd verse. That sentence brought my soul down to the dust; I never thought myself so great a sinner as I then did, and I assure you, that the first time I ever prayed an heartfelt prayer was at Chester Castle; there was my heart laid open for the reception of the gospel. I found I was dead in trespasses and sin; and I also found that 'the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin. Eph. ii. chapter, 1st verse. John, v. chapter, 24th verse. 1st Ep. John, i. chapter, 7th verse. 'In the world I had tribulation but in Christ I have peace.' John, xvi. chapter, 33rd verse. In all my afflictions I have greater joy than ever I had when at liberty, for I know that all things work together for good to them that love God. I well remember you telling us before we left Chester, that we should soon be where we would have no earthly friend; full well do I feel it now, although we have every kindness shown us here that could be expected under our present circumstances. But I have found 'That friend which sticketh closer than a brother.' Prov. chapter xviii. verse 24th.

"I thought everything went very hard with me when I was at Chester, but I found that 'prayer maketh all things easy.' 2nd Cor. chapter xii. verses 9, 10. 'For everything works together for good to them that love God, for he is a shield to them that put their trust in him.' Prov. chapter xxx. verse 5.

I am following the Lord in spirit and in truth; but there are many temptations here to draw us from following the Lord. I beg that you will pray for me that I may be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

"I remain your humble servant,

"W. R."

"PORTLAND PRISON.

"REVEREND SIR,

"I take the present opportunity of writing these few lines to you, hoping they will find you in good health, as they leave me at the present, thanks be to God for his unerring mercies towards me. I never shall forget the first time I heard you preach the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Nor can I yet, or ever forget, the sensation of feeling that came over me at the time; it was like being in another world to me, for it was the first sermon I ever heard in my native tongue, having been brought up a Roman Catholic; and sweet is the remembrance still. But, alas! how little I profited by them; it was like unto good seed sown on stony ground, which flourished for a season, but it had not depth of earth, so in time of temptation I fell away; and in this state I remained my time at Wakefield, halting between two opinions, trying one and then the other, but finding peace in none. But, by the blessing of God, after coming to this place, and receiving instruction from my dear chaplains here, and by prayer and reading the Bible, the Lord has been pleased to hear and pour his spirit upon me, and by His means I became a new creature in Jesus Christ; and I have much to thank God for, for turning me from the error of my ways. I take great delight in reading the Scripture and praying, but I have still great cause for humility when I look within, for I often find clouds of unbelief there.

I became a communicant on Christmas-Day last, and hope and trust that by His help, I presented myself at His table in a fitly manner; I found it hard to give all up for the love of Christ; neither could I put my trust in him until I found I had nothing in myself to trust to. But oh! how precious is Christ to me now; he is the pearl of great price, and happy are those that find him: this I know by experience for without him what would become of me? I should be lost for ever. Blessed be God, it is not the case with me. Royle and Bently desire to be remembered to you; and I hope you will pray for all of us, that we may be kept by the power of God through faith in Christ unto salvation. I beg your acceptance of these few lines from

"Your affectionate but unworthy Servant,

"W. B."

From W. R., alias *W. E.*—*(See Memoirs, page* 19.*)*

"CONVICT ESTABLISHMENT,
"READING.

"REV. SIR,

"Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. I am thankful to God upon every remembrance of you, knowing that while I was under your special care and instruction, I have, by the infinite mercy of God, been brought to true repentance, and that I also received from your hands, the most comfortable Sacrament of the body and blood of Christ; who, while we were yet sinners, gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity; and by whom alone we can obtain peace and pardon, and are reconciled to our heavenly Father, who aforetime was wrath with us because of our rebellion and sin. Dear Sir, you are

aware that before I left you, I requested you to write to Mr. W., acquainting him of the unhappy position in which I am placed, and to see if by any means you could gain some information concerning my mother. I am sadly afraid you have no news for me, or else you would have let me know before this time. If such be the case, do not put yourself to any further trouble on my account, for it is very probable that Mr. W. may not wish to have any correspondence whatever with me, and far be it from me, that I should think the gentleman unkind in so doing, for my behaviour toward him, has been most scandalous, nothwithstanding all his kindness and friendly advice he has from time to time given me; but it would have been as easy for the Ethiopian to change his skin, or the leopard his spots, as to advise me to do good at that time, when my mind was wholly bent on doing evil. Oh! Sir, if my iniquity holds such an aggravated position in the sight of man, what must it be in the sight of a holy and just God, before whom the most trifling of our sins are an abomination. Surely it is of God's mercies that I am not consumed and cut off as a cumberer of the earth, for I have been nothing else than an incumbrance all the days of my life; but blessed be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has now ordered it otherwise; and I hope, through His grace, to be ten times more diligent in His service, than I have been in serving the enemy of my soul. I may remark that, instead of longing for my liberty or the deceits of this world and the flesh, I am rather thankful to God for His chastening and correction, for I know, that through His grace, it will turn out to be the salvation of my soul. All things are possible with God, and as our good chaplain said the other day, 'prayer is far more powerful than locks or bars,' for so it proved in the case of St. Peter, Acts xii. It is my intention to repay two different persons whom I have wronged, and to give them, if possible, doublefold the amount I have taken from them, trusting 'the Lord will enable me so to do.' I am also making some progress in Scriptural knowledge, thanks be to God; and

I hope to show, by my conduct, to all around me that my intention is 'to forsake evil and learn to do well.' The name of our esteemed chaplain is the Rev. J. Field, M.A., who is a very pious and worthy servant of Christ, under whom I have nothing to fear. I told him my real name; his reply was, 'you need not trouble yourself on that account.' I will now conclude by saying I still live in hopes of seeing you once more, please God I should be spared.

"I remain,

"Your very humble Servant,

"W. E."

"WOOLWICH.

"REV. AND VERY DEAR SIR.

"Long as memory retains its seat I trust to retain a grateful sense of your kindness and attention shewn to me. Often have I wished to communicate to you my feelings and the grace and mercy of God towards me, as well as to express my obligations, but have hitherto been let and hindered. Of my early life and course pursued, I shall not here stay to detail; suffice it to say that I had a religious training, and when arrived at man's estate I was led to seek the Lord, and found redemption in His blood, even the forgiveness of my sins; and for several years I walked in the fear of the Lord, and enjoyed the comfort of His Holy Spirit. But when my leaf was green and Providence smiled upon me, piety weakened, and in an evil hour I made shipwreck of faith and a good conscience, and was led captive by the devil at his will. In consequence of my downward course, it was, as you are aware, that my sins did find me out. It was not until I was immured in a prison, and confined within the walls of Chester Castle, that I again

thought of my ways and began to reflect on the course I had been pursuing. You may probably recollect delivering a discourse from Proverbs, xiv. chap., 12th verse, which made such an impression on my mind that language fails to express. My sins were brought to remembrance, and in the bitterness of spirit I cried—

> 'A vile backsliding sinner, I,
> Ten thousand deaths deserve to die.'—

I cried unto the Lord, I lifted up my languid eye to Calvary, and renouncing every other plea, said—

> 'I all on earth forsake, its wisdom, fame, and power;
> And Christ my only portion make my shield and tower.'

—I am still looking to Jesus.

"I remain, Rev. Sir,
"Your most humble and obedient Servant,
"J. L."

From the foregoing letters, which have been received from convicted felons, we may trust that the good seed which has been sown amongst them, has not been in vain. Indeed we have great reason to believe that many of *them*, as well as many discharged prisoners, have been brought from "darkness to light,

and from the power of Satan unto God." For these mercies we would give all the praise and all the glory to Him, who hath given the Gospel treasure unto earthly vessels, "that the excellency of the power might be of God and not of man." We have often looked upon it as a most arduous undertaking, in preaching to a congregation consisting of the vilest of the vile. Often have we entered into our reading-desk, in the week days, to expound the Scriptures; and on the Lord's day, into the pulpit to preach the word of God "in weakness, and in fear and in much trembling," lest our preaching should be in man's wisdom and enticing words, and not in the demonstration of the spirit. Often indeed have we thought that all our preaching has been in vain. But what a comforting lesson have we been taught; viz. "to cast thy bread upon the waters for thou shalt find it after many days." "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not which shall prosper, this or that, or whether they both shall be alike." Our grand object is, to set before them the evil of sin—how and in what way they have sinned against God and the laws of the land—the need of a Saviour—and how the Scriptures, the Articles and Homilies of our beloved Church, all concur in declaring that the only way to obtain mercy or the pardon of our sins is through Jesus Christ, and through faith in his atoning blood. This we have endeavoured to prove, by shewing that nothing can afford tranquillity of mind and satisfaction to the awakened sinner, but the obtaining of God's mercy: and that the spirit of God taketh of the things of Christ to make them known unto us. Many, too many, alas! there are, who feel no concern about obtaining this inestimable blessing. They are insensible of its

And thankful I am to say, that I am still seeking the one thing that is needful, upon which depends my eternal happiness; for I find if I could enjoy all that the world can boast of, and was destitute of this one thing (the salvation of my own soul) I should be but a miserable creature, for in Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; for He is all in all to the believer; and believe me I still bear in mind your watchword 'Thou God seest me,' as well as your sermon on the words 'be sure your sin will find you out.' Dear Sir, please to return my sincere thanks to Eleanor Ford, for her kindness in sending me the present (a book), and tell her, I will keep it as long as I live with the greatest care. I further wish you to give my regards to Messrs. Wright, Hoare, and McDonald, and also my kind schoolmaster Mr. Williams, for all his kindness towards me, and I thank God for all the good I now enjoy, and have enjoyed through his instructions. May the Lord bless and enable you both to impart such truths to the prisoners under your care, that they may leave you as disciples of Christ, is the prayer of your

"Most humble and obedient Servant,
"R. T."

"P.S.—Please to send me an answer, or a line or two, that will cheer the heart of your, I trust, penitent convert."

"WAKEFIELD.

"REV. SIR,

"It is with feelings of gratitude that I now write to you, trusting you will accept my humble thanks for your kind advice and fatherly exhortations, during the time I was a prisoner in Chester Castle. The day previous to my departure

which are calculated to injure the morals of the public in general, but more especially the rising generation. I need only refer the reader to the following remarks, copied from the *Morning Post*:—"Crime has increased frightfully amongst this class of late, viz. the working-class: robberies and concealments of birth have spread consternation among respectable families, whose servants formerly remained with them until they grew grey, and their characters were without a stain. Every master or mistress, whether noble or lowly, ought to make it a duty to ascertain the character of the publications which their servants read. Neither family prayers nor family service are of any avail when the next hour finds the servant immersed in the thrilling narrative of "The Handsome Highwayman, that first robbed, then won the love of the haughty and beautiful countess, and finally became lord of her castle, &c. &c." Let any gentleman walk through some low neighbourhood on a fine day, and he will find girls and boys—the future men and women of England—who were taught to read in the adjoining Infant School, sitting on door steps, or standing at the end of passages, three or four bending over one publication and eagerly devouring its contents, which they understand, alas! too well. There the evil only begins. They next practise the vices which they have read; and, thoroughly digested, their moral system is impregnated with the destructive lesson. The extent of the evil produced by these shameful and dangerous publications on the juvenile classes is scarcely to be credited. Even the *Penny Magazine* in its palmiest days when under the superintendence of the Useful Knowledge Society, never reached such a sale as one or two of these immoral publications have at this present hour. Through

creating and pandering to this vicious appetite, the proprietors of these infamous journals are enabled to live in viceful ease, and even to afford good pay to their unprincipled contributors. They are plague spots on the body of freedom—foul vermin that creep into, and are difficult to dislodge from, a free press, the liberty of which they abuse and disgrace."

The *Liverpool Mail* says, "The sale of these cheap publications is enormous, and the mischief they do is beyond all calculation. It is stated on high authority that the sale of one of these works amounts to *a quarter of a million weekly*, and the price is *one penny*. Their weekly budget consists of tales of love, murder, and superstition, strongly interwoven with a hollow profession of morality, which is evidently intended as a cloak to cover many sins. Wood engravings, exhibiting highly-dramatic effects, are adopted, and succeed in attracting thousands to the unwholesome mixture. In each of the highly-successful among these publications, *a department is devoted to love correspondence between the juvenile readers, whose passions are thus inflamed, &c. &c.* The amount of this kind of correspondence is immense; in the course of a month, columns are devoted to it." The principal purchasers of these exciting and evil-prompting works are boys and girls, youths and maidens just verging into manhood and womanhood, and also thousands of servant-girls. One work is devoted to the service of the latter, and *solicits statements of their grievances, with any hints they can furnish about the families in which they live.* Thoughtless parents, who pay no regard to what their children read, call for these packets of poison and take them home to their sons and daughters. They are highly spiced. Duchesses are seduced by

out which all our own works are of no avail) still to be able to give satisfaction to all placed in authority over me. I wrote to my friends desiring that they would try another petition, praying that I might either be sent out of the country at once as a ticket-of-leave-holder, or that I might be allowed to remain at Pentonville prison until I could be so sent out, but they write me that they think it of no further use again to petition; under these circumstances I have, since I heard from them, entered my name on the governor's books to be sent out as a prisoner, and fully expect, if the governor finds upon investigation that my character is satisfactory, that I shall be sent out in the next ship, which will be most likely this month. My dear Sir, I do most earnestly desire that you would again use your influence on my behalf, as most likely by your writing to the chaplain of this prison that the governor and authorities might be induced to select me as one of those to be sent out in the next ship; as I feel sure that I should be far more comfortable if sent abroad, especially if sent to Western Australia. The companions among whom I have here to work are really very wicked; those who are sent abroad as prisoners are selected by the governor for their general good conduct, I therefore should have a better chance of meeting with better companions.

"My dear Sir, I should esteem it a very, very great favour if you would kindly write me a few lines, as I feel almost as one without a hope in life except the hope in death. I do also most sincerely hope that you will write to the chaplain on my behalf,

"And believe me ever,

"Your most obedient humble Servant,

"S. G."

"DARTMOOR, DEVON.

"REV. SIR,

"I humbly hope the contents of this letter will be ample excuse for my presumption in addressing you, being assured of your good nature and humanity towards those un-

happy individuals, who through vice and dissipation have made shipwreck of character and virtue, and by it made themselves objects of disgrace and become friendless slaves, transported from their native country and from dearest friends, of which class of persons I call myself one; but through the grace and infinite mercy of Divine Providence, being led to repentance for my manifold sins and wickedness, I verily believe that all old things are passed away, and are become new; and I heartily thank God that his Word or working arm has been made bare, and that I am still a living monument of his mercy to praise Him; but, Rev. Sir, it is really and truly very distressing to me to hear my poor father's out of employ, and more especially to think that without the intercession of some kind friend in my behalf with the Secretary of State, that I must be sent out of the country, well knowing that my health is so much impaired; I should never more behold those dear parents on earth under such distressing circumstances. I most humbly implore you, Rev. Sir, to petition the Secretary of State that I may serve my time in England. If it should please the Lord to spare such an unworthy creature that I may, at the expiration of it, be enabled by my industry to help to maintain those parents, who I have caused almost to drop into the grave with sorrow; and for which favour, Rev. Sir, it shall be ever remembered with feelings of the deepest gratitude.

"I remain, Rev. Sir,

"Your most humble and obedient Servant,

"T. B."

[*From the same to his Parents.*]

"DARTMOOR, DEVON.

"DEAR PARENTS,

"I was much grieved when the books came that I had no money here to pay the carriage, and before I could let the minister know, they were sent back, otherwise

selves to be led away by specious appearances and empty names. Too frequently are pleasures presented to the unwary and ignorant under various forms. In all cases they ought to be examined and tried; if they accord with the Word of God, which is the only touchstone by which all things may be known—then, well and good—but if not, they must be rejected.

As this little volume may in all probability fall into the hands of those who have the charge of prisoners, commonly called "warders," or "turnkeys," we would most affectionately address a few lines to them. Yours is a highly-responsible situation, and upon you it depends to see that the rules of the prison are fully carried out. However watchful and however careful the governor may be, (and all who know the governor of this Castle, know that he is both kind, careful, and watchful; at the same time he is very firm), that he in himself cannot do all that is required for the good discipline of those who are placed under his charge. You must co-operate, and above all be in unity amongst yourselves. Live in brotherly love one with the other. "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may administer grace to its hearers." "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you." Ephes. iv. chapter, 29—32d verse. Learn to say with St. Paul, and not only to say, but to feel what he said to the Philippians: "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." A contented spirit is like a watch; though you may carry it up and down with you, yet the spring

of it is not shaken, nor the wheels out of order; but the watch keeps its perfect motion. So was it with St. Paul. Though God carried him into various conditions, yet he was not lifted up with the one, nor cast down with the other. The *spring* of his heart was not broken; the *wheels* of his affections were not disordered, but kept their constant motion towards heaven; *still content.* The ship that lies at anchor may sometimes be a little shaken; but never sinks. Flesh and blood may have its fears and disquiets; but the grace of God will always check them. A Christian having cast anchor in heaven, his heart never sinks; a gracious spirit is a contented spirit. This indeed is a difficult task to learn. St. Paul did not learn this at the feet of *Gamaliel.* He was taught of God. May you also be taught by the same spirit! I feel very thankful for the kind co-operation I have always had at your hands, and I trust we shall always be found to be fellow-workers together for good, to those who are placed under our charge. Of this I am convinced, that none but good and kind words are calculated to find their way to the heart of the poor prisoner. Even the simple words, "God bless you," I have often witnessed to have been too much for the unhappy convict. They have reached his heart; they were *strange* words to him; they have often caused tears to flow from the eyes of the *once* most desperate character. "A word spoken in due season, how good is it."

I find from my experience, that much and great good may be done by the way of improving the mind of the prisoner, through the instrumentality of the governor, the chaplain, and the officers. They may be fellow-workers together for good to those unfortunates, who are placed under their charge. A kind

word has its good effects. If kindness has not the power and does not become the means of reforming the mind of the prisoner, I am sure that harshness will never produce any good effect. I am in duty bound to say, that I find all the officers in this place, especially our excellent and worthy governor, to be most kind and courteous; and in several instances, have been instrumental of doing good; as may be seen by the several prisoners' letters which I have received from them. There is one great difficulty with which we have to contend, with the discharged prisoner. In some instances we behold a change in the man's conduct, his conversation, and his manners. At length the prison-door is opened, and the captive set free. There he stands—in the Castle Yard—no home—no friends—no character, which can recommend him to an employer. We give him a few days' work; for which he gets sometimes six shillings, or the most ten shillings, to begin life afresh. It is difficult indeed to know what to do, for the best for them. In some instances we have been enabled to get them situations, and not in one single case have we had reason to regret. Several have become soldiers, and some sailors, and are doing well. In obtaining situations for the latter, often great expenses are attending it. Within the last few days, we have been able to procure a ship for J. F. page 16; this was not done without great inconvenience. He was obliged to be kept for four weeks or more from the time of his discharge, before he could go out to sea, and to be clothed, &c. This was not done without expenses being incurred; and for which there is no fund.

We can only pray that it may please our Heavenly Father to open a way for them, that they may again be restored to society,

and become bright and burning lights in the midst of a sinful world! These are times when the necessity of acting up to our profession as Christians is peculiarly called for, and especially in matters which concern the well-being of our fellow-creatures. "May the love of Christ constrain us!" Oh, the love of Christ! the restoring, cherishing, sanctifying love of Christ! It is the life of the soul—the coal of living fire, which kindles on the altar of the heart the sacrifice of the affections. It is the substance of all joy—the well-spring of all holiness! It lifts the soul above the billows of this stormy existence, into the pure sunshine and peaceful calm of heaven; and flings a brightness over the most perplexing and desolating dispensations.

The Rev. Joseph Kingsmill, the excellent and highly-esteemed chaplain of Pentonville Prison; author of "Chapters on Prisons and Prisoners," (London—Longman, Green and Brown) says, on the subject of reclaiming prisoners: "It has been proved by experience, even as respects convicts on the very largest scale, not only that the reformation of offenders, when transported to a colony in a distant part of the world, takes place, if they are preserved in due proportion of numerical inferiority to the untainted population; but that, when so regulated, they constitute the greatest possible addition to the strength, progress, and riches of a colony." From official papers laid before Parliament, before the unhappy crowding of convicts in New South Wales began, and the gang-system was introduced, it appears that between the years 1800 and 1817, that is, within 17 years—out of 17,000 convicts transported to New South Wales, no less than *six thousand had, at the close of the*

period, obtained their freedom for their good conduct; and had earned among them, by their free labour, property to the amount of £1,500,000! We in this country, (highly-favoured as it is) want more of that philanthropic spirit, which shone so brightly in the character of the great Howard. It surely becomes us, more especially those who have felt the love of God shed abroad in their own hearts, to lend a willing and helping hand, in some way, to those poor unhappy prisoners, who are not only willing but most anxious to be reformed. The king of Sweden, when writing on the subject of receiving discharged prisoners again into society, says, "A feeling of morality, degenerated to implacability ought not to repulse his contrition, or suppress his good intentions; but his return to evil must be prevented by his being enabled to obtain honest employment. There is an extensive field for communal and private exertion. After the law has executed the punishment, and the State has taken care of the inward improvement, it is the business of the citizen to offer a helping hand to the individual restored to freedom. Both charity and prudence urge this; for it is the noblest and safest means of preventing new crimes." This we have tried, and (God be praised!) our efforts have been crowned with success, so far as we have been able to carry out our limited plans. Much more might be done if the means were provided. In France, we are informed, that much and great good has been accomplished for the improvement of liberated prisoners—but more especially for juvenile delinquents. The Rev. Sydney Turner, (the praiseworthy and indefatigable chaplain of the Philanthropic Institution at Red-Hill Farm, Surrey); says, "The Institution of Mettray is governed by directors, chosen at the annual meeting of

much as possibly I can, and assist you in the time of your old age as you did me in my infancy; and if we do not meet on this earth, I hope we shall all meet in those happy regions of eternity, where grief and mourning cannot enter; and there sing our songs of happiness in the company of those blessed followers of Christ, that have long since passed through this valley of woe in a much more troublesome and thorny path than that which we have had; for, bad as my lot is, I deserve it all. But there is those that have suffered much in this life, and have met with a violent death, all for the sake of the love of Christ and his precepts. Then how can such an unworthy wretch as I am repine, since I deserve all I meet; so, my dear parents, continue to lead a godly life, and put your whole confidence in Christ, and we shall be carried buoyant o'er this heavy sea of trouble, when we place Christ at the helm, and he will steer us to the desired haven of bliss where all trouble and anguish cease. My dear parents, sister, and brother, I hope this will find you all in good health, and hoping you will answer this as soon as you can, letting me know all particulars; and please to remember me to all enquiring friends, particularly Mr. Joseph, and my old master. I have been anxiously expecting to hear from them, but perhaps it has not been convenient for them to do so; when you write please to let me know the reason why I am promised that they will write to me; when I am deceived in this manner it makes me think that no reliance can be placed on what you have sent me in your former letters; neither of them are aware that a short epistle from them would be a healing balm to my troubled breast; but, blessed be God that He has given one who will not deceive, for what he has promised he will perform to the uttermost, for his love is beyond all conception, and He sticketh to his own closer than a brother. I conclude with my kind love to you all; so adieu! And

"I remain your undutiful Son,

"T. B."

until there shall be found no misery to be relieved; no spot of moral desolation to be fertilized upon the whole earth. We do not say that we are to travel through the length and breadth of our land, and to enquire where misery is taking up her abode? There can be no doubt but that we shall always find plenty to do with those who are residing in our own immediate neighbourhood. Oh that more could be done for them! We do however plead earnestly for those of our fellow-creatures, who may be without home, without parents, and without friends. Surely they have a claim upon our benevolence. Blessed be God, there is enough for all! We ask but for that which can be well done; viz. to give employment to those unfortunate men and women who have suffered, and have paid the penalty of the law, and again become inhabitants amongst us.

Whilst on the subject of discharged prisoners it may be well first to notice, what my dear brother in the Lord and fellow-labourer in the cause of Christ says about them. I mean the Rev. J. Kingsmill, whose name we have mentioned in a preceding page: "A small, but most useful institution was formed in connexion with the gaol at Durham, in 1848, by the excellent governor and chaplain, assisted by friends and magistrates in their private capacity; the results of which may serve to show the exceeding great value, economically and morally, of efforts made in behalf of reclaimed prisoners. The total expenditure for 1848, 1849, 1850, and nine months in 1851, was only £160. The number of discharged prisoners restored to their relatives, or placed in situations where they could earn an honest livelihood, was 359. Of these only 12 were re-committed to prison since, and 19 are considered failures, but not re-committed."

What is there to prevent our having such an institution in connexion with Chester Castle? We have many truly warm-hearted friends of humanity within our city and in our county. Yea, hundreds who do sympathize with the unfortunate and the wretched. We have two institutions established in our city for unfortunate women. These are well supported, and are excellent establishments, under good and pious matrons, visited by many pious ladies who devote a great portion of their time to the well-being of these female prisoners. They have been the means of providing situations for most of their inmates, and generally speaking, these discharged prisoners, who were once unhappy women, are now good and faithful servants. Can we not have an institution, similar to the one established at Durham, for discharged male prisoners? I trust ere long we shall have one in Chester also. If only a few influential citizens and neighbouring gentry would take this subject up as warmly as they have taken up many charitable institutions, the object will soon be accomplished. May God incline their hearts to do so! The Rev. J. Kingsmill says—"the cost of these institutions is so trifling, compared with the magnitude of the results, that we naturally inquire by what machinery the good is accomplished? Nothing is more simple. The refuge for young women is a room in the house of a married schoolmaster. The domestic discipline of the family, and the instruction and advice of the Christian ladies who visit the prison, are the chief influences. Friends are communicated with, employers are obtained by means of these zealous and benevolent persons, &c. Somewhat similar arrangements are made for male prisoners. The co-operation of the magistrates, chiefly in carrying out a suggestion of the chaplain,

'to sentence each member of a gang to a different term of sentence,' is stated greatly to have contributed to the success." Oh, that such a plan may be fully carried out in our county, and that it may please God to crown our efforts with His blessing. There are doubtless many amongst us in this our highly-favoured land, who mourn before God on account of the sins of their countrymen. "They behold transgressors and are grieved;" they "sigh and cry for the abominations of the land." Public evils excite in them personal concern. This branch of duty is not wholly neglected; and we are assured "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." Blessed be God that, notwithstanding all our national offences, there are considerations, upon which we may ground our hopes of mercy and deliverance. "We have heard with our ears, and our fathers have told us" what the Lord hath done for our land in ages past. "He hath not dealt so with any nation: praise ye the Lord." Our beloved island hath long enjoyed the glorious gospel, and multitudes have been made partakers of its converting and sanctifying influence; and at the present time there are not wanting those who know it to be "the gospel of their salvation." Such characters are the glory of our country; they exemplify in their lives and conversation the Word of Truth, and give evidence that they are the "faithful soldiers and servants of our Lord Jesus Christ." They are ever ready to exert their utmost ability in diffusing Scriptural knowledge. This they know to be the best antidote against the prevailing power of sin, the most effectual means to reform the characters of men. Endeavours like these will, we trust, meet the Divine approbation, and contribute to our national security. Every

Christian-man will readily comply with the injunction of the great apostle of the Gentiles: "I exhort, therefore, that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men: for kings and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty." Do we love our country? Do we wish the succeeding generations to be more virtuous and more happy than our own? Remember, that it is with the parents and masters of the present day, that the work must begin. Let parents be careful to "command their children and their household after them," to give an early and constant attendance upon the public services in the Church.

Much also depends upon the exertions made by our clergy, under the Divine blessing, for the future well-being of our fellow-creatures. I conceive that many branches of ministerial duty may be included under the head of *private ministrations*. We remember well our late highly-respected Bishop, now Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, once saying at a public meeting, "that a house-going clergyman made a church-going people." The great apostle neglected not, when in a settled ministry, to go "from house to house," when occasion required. I am not teaching. I profess not to know what they ought to do; but I desire to have my own mind as well as theirs, drawn with serious thought to those things "which though we knew them before, we need to be established in; that in all things we may approve ourselves as the ministers of God." If we wish to see our rising generation improved in morals, in religious knowledge, and if we wish to see an improvement in the condition of our fellow-creatures among the labouring population, we must know

them. The terms shepherds, watchmen, overseers, stewards, import not a mere general superintendence, but an acquaintance with individual wants, and a distribution suitable to the occasion. A venerable clergyman once observed, "my heart does not upbraid me with having kept back anything profitable to my people, but I fear I have not followed them sufficiently with domestic and personal exhortations." Bishop Burnet in remarking on the question in the Ordination Service, "will you maintain and set forward as much as lieth in your, &c.?" says, this is as plainly personal, and constant, as words can make anything; and in this is expressed the so-much neglected, but so necessary duty, which incumbents owe their flocks; in a private way visiting, instructing, and admonishing them, which is one of the most useful and important parts of their duty." I doubt not that with many it is a part of duty to which the greatest difficulty is found. Surely such private visiting with our poor neighbours is calculated to give greater efficiency to our pulpit instructions; in giving an impulse to our reading, in making us acquainted with the ways of the human heart, and with the particular cares which call for counsel. As chaplain of a prison, I know from experience that private visiting, either by going into the cell of the prisoner, or having him quietly in our own office, we find by our close conversation we are enabled, under the Divine teaching, to direct the awakened conscience, to sound and whole some truth. Above all, great attention must be paid to th young, I allude to the instruction of the young. We know ar frequently lament the great ignorance which prevails amon many of the lower order of our country labourers; and w little instruction they derive from pulpit discourses, even tho

we use as we should do "great plainness of speech." We grieve over their unintelligent and loose attachment to the church, while we see them almost unalterably fixed in wrong and pernicious habits of thought and life. We have no doubt but that much of this is to be traced to the defectiveness of religious education. Let us more frequently bring before their young minds the doctrines and principles of our own beloved and Scriptural Church. Let them know what the church teaches. Let us never be weary in well-doing, "for in good time we shall reap if we faint not." By our endeavouring to prevent crime—we must be careful to set a good and proper example to those of our dependents. In the holy language of St. John we would say, "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God: and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God."

We have given an affecting view of some of our national crimes, and the peculiar circumstances of aggravation under which they were committed. And where is the man who loves his country, that would not, were he rightly impressed with these considerations, step forward and exert all his ability in promoting the interests of religion and morality, so essential to its welfare? This is true patriotism; for "righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." Our real happiness consists in the favour and protection of God: without this our condition must be perilous indeed.

Finally, "Let us run with patience, the race set before us." Let us run having the powerful love of Christ for

our principle of action: the wide dominion of Christ for our field of action: Christ once on the cross, but now on the throne, for our strength, our example, and our theme: the Spirit of Christ for our fitness: the Word of Christ for our rule, and the glory of Christ for our end!

On many a solemn stately pile
Of hoary age, and crumbling stone,
The orb of day his glory shed,
And bright on Cestria's Castle shone.

Upspringing from his grassy bed
The warbling lark sang glad and free,
While twittering songsters caught the strain
And joined in notes of melody.

Alas! in yonder Castle's cells
Methought, while all around is gay,
How many a weary captive pines
With aching heart from day to day.

Who, Howard-like, shall mourn his fate
And to the captive's cell draw nigh?
At early dawn or evening's close,
Ah! who shall shall hear the prisoner's cry?

Yes, in this land of Christian love,
Though Justice seals the culprit's doom,
Kind Mercy brings the lamp of truth
To light and cheer his prison's gloom.

The Christian pastor's voice reproves
For sin; yet points to bliss on high;
And tells of one on Calvary's cross,
Who heard a dying culprit's sigh.

Truly, some sorrowing captive cries,
"My weary life to death draws nigh,
"Oh! is there pardon still for me?
"Lord Jesus, hear a prisoner's sigh.

"While Cherubim before thee bend
"And veil their faces as they cry,
"O Lord of Hosts, in love attend,
"And listen to a prisoner's sigh."

See! Angels catch the breath of prayer
And waft it to the realms on high;
While golden harps resound with joy
"The Lord hath heard the prisoner's sigh."

—M. E. B.

Pullan, Printer, Watergate Street, Chester.